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LACHING THE SHIELD

Back in November 1970, J. Edgar Hoover, appearing before a subcommittee of the Senate Appropriations Committee in support of supplemental appropriations for the Federal Bureau of Investigation, unveiled a sensational plot: a group of antiwar Catholic activists, he said, led by Philip and Daniel Berrigan (who had been imprisoned for their militant protests) was planning to kidnap Henry Kissinger and to blow up underground electrical conduits and steam pipes in Washington.

The charges, an overnight sensation, turned out to be unsubstantiated, a fantasy. Why did Hoover do it? To guarantee the Bureau's budget? A diversionary tactic? To force the Justice Department's hand? A simple smear? The mystery is unsolved, although the mischief of Hoover's charge lives on for all to ponder: he had usurped the grand jury's collateral roles of accuser and shield against unfounded or malicious prosecution.

Comes now Abscam, Brilab and fifty other possible stings around the country. Elsewhere in this issue, Stephen Gillers and Paul Chevigny discuss the thin line between investigation and frame-up, the potential and perils of politicalized target selection by members of the executive branch. It is, after all, an election year, and such dangers should not be lightly dismissed.

But let us also ask just who it is who is attempting to profit from the old master's example. Is it the Bureau, fearful that its power and mystique will suffer from efforts to put through a charter that will restrain its secret investigations? Or is the answer to be found in Congress, whose members seem in such a rush to investigate that one suspects their motive to be less the pursuit than the tainting of justice? Either way, the grand jury's vital role as accuser and shield has been undermined.

IN DEFENSE OF ABSCAM
Stephen Gillers

REJOINDER
Paul Chevigny

THE SHORT LIFE OF ABC
Laurie Becklund

THE A.D.A.'S LONG SHADOW
John S. Rosenberg

PERSIAN GULF ALLIES
Fred Halliday

READING, WRITING AND RICHES
Richard Gilman

SPECIAL REPORT

THE SAVAK DOCUMENTS

What the media invariably refer to as "the alleged crimes of the Shah" will, it appears, be considered by an international commission. Recently The Nation *received copies of documents and photographs that had been taken from Savak, the Shah's infamous secret [illegible] had been given by Iranian Government officials to a group of American clergy accompanied by Prof. Thomas M. Ricks, an Iranian specialist at Georgetown University, during a visit to Teheran. The documents themselves are the routine paperwork of death—burial permits and autopsy reports of fifty well-known political prisoners who died, violently in most cases, during their incarceration. The photographs show the dead as they appeared to the official medical examiners. In the dry factual medical prose there is no mention of torture, nor any admission that the deaths were, in effect, legal murders. But, taken together, and read by someone familiar with Savak's operations and with the evidence brought forth in the postrevolutionary trials, they constitute one body of evidence of the implacable mechanism of repression under the Shah. We have invited Reza Baraheni, an Iranian poet and novelist and past* Nation *contributor, who personally experienced Savak torture, to interpret the reports and place them in context. The authenticity of the documents themselves has been attested to by an official of Amnesty International and an independent American Iranian specialist.* —The Editors

REZA BARAHENI

The revolution in Iran broke open a door to a dark room in the nation's past, bringing to light secret documents of the old regime. A massive bureaucracy of deceit, hypocrisy and corruption

(Continued on Page 198)

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LETTERS.

OILY CRUSADE

North Hollywood, Calif.

The articles in your February 2 issue by Michael Doyle and Richard Falk on Iran ["Needed: A Little Help From Friends"] and Alan Wolfe on Afghanistan ["Carter's Afghan Security Blanket"] are by far the clearest and wisest analyses of these crises I have seen in a month of uneasy reading. One dubiety troubles me, however, weighting prospects on the darker side. The American public's response to the Iranian and Soviet "threats," a mix of superficial humanity, *machismo* and political immaturity, did more than shove Carter from a trembling centrist position into the clutch of the icy fascist Zbigniew Brzezinski; it certified the *righteousness* of the embrace.

Hence, to this again reborn Baptist, any adventurism is now one of high morality, God's will operating through a second term. Guarding the Persian Gulf is a defense against demons of evil rather than an oily power struggle, "national security" transcendent. Protest against such a crusade thus becomes not just dissidence to be quelled but treason and heresy justifying an Inquisition. Joe McCarthy's ghost must be chortling in the wings. *John Bright*

CENTRAL AMERICAN DISAPPOINTMENT

Ojai, Calif.

As a new reader of *The Nation* I was extremely disappointed in Stephen Kinzer's article ["Central American Dominoes," *The Nation*, Nov. 10, 1979]. Rather than providing insights into the popular and revolutionary movements in Central America, the article repeats the misconceptions and distortions of the conservative press. Three points merit comment. The first is purely factual. The Guatemalan opposition, far from being fragmented, is one of the most united in Central America. The Democratic Front against the Repression is made up of more than 160 organizations including labor, peasants, students, clergy, shantytown dwellers and the two social democratic parties.

Second, Kinzer's portrayal of the Popular Revolutionary Bloc as extremists or guerrillas is inaccurate, irresponsible and contributes nothing to our understanding. In a time when the conservative press increasingly characterizes genuine liberation movements as extremist or terrorist, the progressive press has a responsibility to go beyond rhetoric and labels to provide an accurate picture of these movements. This is especially important today as U.S. foreign policy is shifting to the right and the label of extremist will be used as a justification for intervention to support the status quo.

Last, it is incredible that Kinzer, in his closing quote, would imply that we should look toward the U.S. Government to promote democracy in Central America—the same United States that built, armed and supported the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua for forty-three years, the same United States that overthrew the democratically elected Arbenz Government in Guatemala in 1954 and the same United States that continues today to support repressive regimes in Honduras and El Salvador. The new "progressive" regime in El Salvador is a good illustration of what the State Department's commitment to democracy is—helping build a democratic facade for a Government that is turning out to be no less repressive than its predecessor. If we are truly interested in democracy and social justice in Central America, we should support the popular organizations—trade unions, peasant leagues, student associations, etc.—that are fighting for a better society, rather than place our hopes in the U.S. Government or some "progressive" elite group (military or civilian) that was participating in the repression only yesterday. *Charles Cienfuegos*

KINZER'S REPLY

Boston

Mr. Cienfuegos's assertion that the Guatemalan opposition is "one of the most united in Central America" is not supported by the evidence. Very strong opposition movements exist in Costa Rica, Panama, Belize and El Salvador. In contrast, the Guatemalan opposition, despite the formation of the Democratic Front, has been decimated by assassinations and intimidation.

Regarding the Popular Revolutionary Bloc in El Salvador, it is a broad-based coalition which had as many as 80,000 members at the time of the October coup. Though dozens of members were killed by police attacks, it is not a clandestine or guerrilla organization. It is closely linked, however, with the Popular Liberation Forces, an underground group which has kidnapped and killed several Salvadorans both in and out of government and was apparently responsible for the death of a Swiss diplomat in a botched kidnap attempt last May.

Finally, Mr. Cienfuegos thinks it "incredible" that the United States could play a constructive role in the future of Central America. At this moment, the revolutionary Government of Nicaragua is intensely lobbying the U.S. Congress for a $75 million aid package. Americans who choose to oppose such aid should not do so with the view that they are thereby helping to support the Nicaraguan revolution. *Stephen Kinzer*

YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, JERRY BROWN

Seattle, Wash.

Francis Carney ["The Making of a 'Flake,' " *The Nation*, Dec. 1, 1979] has cut through one of the greatest (or at least most obvious) injustices being dealt any prominent individual of our years. Only one person is capable of turning around Jerry Brown's negative image and misunderstood character and that is Jerry Brown himself.

He has already risen from California's unknown Secretary of State position to become the quarter-term Governor, with a 90 percent approval rating, who beat Jimmy Carter in 1976 in five out of six last-minute primaries and who has the courage to govern not by entrenched standards but by his own unconventional wisdom.

His father, former California Gov. Pat Brown, recently made a somewhat ironic, but half-true statement that "[Jerry's] making sense in his speeches for the first time, and now nobody's paying attention." They're not paying attention for reasons well covered by Carney.

Thank you for having the courage to tell the truth about Jerry Brown when it's extremely unpopular to do so. *Ben Rabinowitz*

Calvin Trillin is on sabbatical. His column will return March 15.

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Already, employers who had previously resisted black unions with ferocity are actively supporting and sometimes recruiting black workers into parallel organizations. Such practices are not prohibited by South African labor law. On the contrary, they are facilitated by a system of "provisional registration," which permits the recognition of and special privileges for black unions that may exist in name only. Employers assist such paper unions by "top-down" recruitment of their workers, who, very likely, had no say about the union's coming in in the first place.

What is particularly troublesome about all of this is the lack of any requirement that a registered trade union be an independent, autonomous organization—a principle that is essential to the concept of freedom of association for workers. Autonomy is not a prerequisite for the recognition or registration of unions, and the law negates freedom of association by prohibiting racially integrated unions. This last, as much as any other factor, has prompted the Durban black unions (they have Indian as well as black members) to boycott, at least partially, the registration process.

Equally problematic is the question of trade unionism for blacks in the critical mining industry. On September 25, 1979, the Government, in a widely acclaimed move, reversed itself and allowed migrant workers from the "homelands" full trade-union rights. But foreign nationals—workers from Lesotho, Mozambique and other black African countries, who make up 46 percent of all miners—continue to be excluded. Their exclusion makes black union organization of the mines difficult, to say the least.

Finally, even if black unions are registered, they may be barred from participation in collective bargaining by the veto of one white union or employer. Factory works committees, which until this year were the officially recognized vehicle for the expression of black grievances, are also to be given an expanded role and will represent all racial groups—a change that creates a rival organization to both black and white unions that could undermine them.

Despite this and other difficulties and ambiguities in the new legislation, it is quite possible that black workers, if only out of long-seething frustration caused by the parallel unions' ineffectual representation, will be all the more likely to insist upon something better—just as American workers rejected company-sponsored and -dominated unions more than forty years ago. The big question is whether the analogy has validity, and whether a normal trade-union movement can evolve in an abnormal country. The answer remains in doubt.

WILLIAM B. GOULD

William B. Gould, professor of law at Stanford Law School, has recently returned from his third visit to South Africa. He is the author of Black Workers in White Unions *(Cornell University Press).*

COMING UP. What lay behind the Russians' Afghanistan invasion? Jerry Hough reports on what he learned during a recent trip to Moscow.

Future Secrets

Once again, from a new, if predictable, quarter, the Freedom of Information Act (F.O.I.A.) is under attack. The proposed foreign intelligence charter bill (S. 2284), which was unveiled by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence on February 9, would almost totally exempt the Central Intelligence Agency from the act (except for individuals who request their own files), and the Federal Bureau of Investigation is expected to push for an amendment that would cover their "foreign" intelligence files (including the antiwar movement and the Communist Party investigation) as well. A similar section in Senator Daniel P. Moynihan's bill (S. 2216), introduced on January 24, would exempt not only the C.I.A. but also the F.B.I. and any other "intelligence agency or component" of the Government (see George Lardner Jr., "Moynihan Unleashes the C.I.A.," *The Nation*, February 16).

In the present charged atmosphere it hardly seems to matter that no injury to national security has been persuasively traced to the F.O.I.A. Indeed, only last year, C.I.A. Deputy Director Frank Carlucci told the House Select Committee on Intelligence, "It is undeniable that under the current F.O.I.A. national security exemptions exist to protect our most vital information." John Blake, deputy director for administration at the Agency, went even further. Testifying before a subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee in 1977, Blake admitted that at first the act was traumatic for a service that was schooled in secrecy. But, he concluded, "We have been able to make the necessary adjustments. I am pleased to report that, in fact, I think the Agency is better off for it."

The F.O.I.A. may not have helped the Russians or the Iranians but it has enabled the American people to make the C.I.A. more accountable. Now that Washington is clamoring to jump on the cold-war wagon, the C.I.A. and its supporters in the Administration and the Senate have seized the chance to push F.O.I.A. in front of the crowd, hoping that it will be trampled to death in the mad rush. And no wonder. Of all the "leashes" restraining the C.I.A., none has proved more effective than the public scrutiny fostered by the F.O.I.A.

In the conclusion of his perceptive study, *The Man Who Kept the Secrets: Richard Helms and the C.I.A.*, Thomas Powers recalls the new day that appeared to be dawning because of the creation of an intelligence oversight committee in the wake of the Church committee's probe into C.I.A. abuses, but he questioned whether anything had really changed. "The worst blunders and most egregious excesses of the past tended to occur when everyone in Washington recognized the same threat and agreed that something had to be done. The Senate's intelligence oversight committee, after a year or two of skepticism, may simply join an expanded inner circle of policy makers who determine the American role in the world, and keep the secrets of the future as their predecessors did those of the past."

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ARTICLES.

Savak

(Continued From Front Cover)

had fallen, and fortunately this bureaucracy, intoxicated by its own visions of immortality, had preserved documents on everything and everyone. The names, code names, identity numbers and pictures of Savak agents appeared everywhere. The torture chambers and stations were identified. Prerevolutionary Teheran was shown to be a sick city dotted with grisly torture chambers. Three major places of inquisition had been built adjacent to the University of Teheran. From outside they resembled the houses of well-to-do Iranians. Some of the torture instruments were still there when I visited two of those stations on the second day of the revolution. A mysterious interrogation center right in the heart of the city had underground canals lit with dim electric lights leading to cells in which rotting pieces of human flesh were still clinging to the torture instruments. The Shah had said that torture stopped after 1976. How could those gobbets of flesh and bones have been gouged and sawed before 1976? Ironically, the name of the owner of the house was Colonel Zibaie (whose surname means beauty).

But these and many other less important stations scattered about the entire city paled into insignificance when compared with the Komite, Evin and Qasr prisons, where systematic beating, whipping and torture of political prisoners went on relentlessly day and night. The most modern installation was Evin, where cells opened and closed with mysterious codes. When the prison was besieged by revolutionary forces, faint and imploring voices that seemed to come from the bottom of a well could be heard from behind walls with hidden doors whose keys only the highest authorities of the Savak held.

The documents released to *The Nation* are couched in the routine jargon of the Savak. I know from my own experience as a political prisoner that the Savak used two different languages in its torture-interrogations, one a private language between torturer and tortured, the other an elaborate system of euphemisms for official consumption. Both languages described the same acts, but the vocabulary of one discredited and dishonored—raped, one might say—the other. "You bastard," the torturer would shout, "I will wrench out from you the identity of the asshole you were with on Friday night." But when he translated these words into the official interrogation transcript issued under the imprimatur of the Savak, the words were insolently altered:

Reza Baraheni is an Iranian poet, novelist and critic. His recent books in English are God's Shadow *(Indiana University Press) and* The Crowned Cannibals *(Vintage, Random House). He has taught literature at American and Iranian universities. At present he lives in Iran.*

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"Your Excellency, would you please identify the friend whom you visited on Friday night?" "Excellency" was "bastard," "your friend" was "asshole" and "would you please," meant "wrench out." One might call this a cannibalization of language. The documents put at the disposal of *The Nation* should be decoded with this practice in mind.

The documents, one of which is reproduced on page 201, are burial permits and autopsy reports of about fifty prominent prisoners who were eliminated by the Shah's secret political police. On their surface the documents are very simple and official. On the first page is the number and date of the document with the official letterhead of the Shah's Justice Department, featuring a lion with the sun on its back and a sword held erect in its hand. The Book of Law is held open at the feet of the lion and right below it reads: "Public Legal Physician's Office" (a body similar to the coroner's office in the United States). The burial permit for Bizhan Jazani, who was a leading guerrilla theoretician known as "the Iranian Che Guevara," is typical. It states: "Permission is hereby given for the burial of Bizhan, the son of _____ [no name is recorded for the father], surnamed Jazani, about 35 years old, who died as a result of bullets fired into his skull and brain damage, on 29, 11, 1354 [the Iranian calendar year] (April 1975)." It is signed by a doctor, and the seal of the Legal Physician's Office appears on the signature. The date of the signature is one day after the date of death.

The autopsy report that follows is more detailed and its real meaning is not immediately apparent. The second date on the burial permit appears here too. These are followed by the names of the physician, the interrogator and the representative of the Military Court, the name and surname of the deceased, the day and hour of the autopsy, the name of the hospital, which is Army Hospital 501, the burial permit's number, the nature of the event leading to the deceased's death, which is given as "confrontation with officers while escaping prison." Also inscribed are reporters' names, which in this case are the Justice Department of the Iranian Army and Iran's Counterinsurgency Committee, and finally the date of death. There are also spaces for entering the name of the father, the photograph number, the place of the accident and the place of death. But these have been left blank.

The autopsy report reads: "The corpse belongs to a man who is about 35 years of age and upon external examination shows no signs of suffocation or poisoning. The entry holes of two bullets can be seen, one with a diameter of 1 centimeter, on the left eyebrow, the other about 2 centimeters above the left eyebrow on the forehead with the diameter of 1.15 centimeters. The bullets have hit the skull and there are no exit holes. From the entry holes, brain liquid and watered blood ooze out. The skull around the holes has been crushed. Considering the above information the cause of death is determined as bullets striking the skull and brain damage. Thus the burial permit is issued according to the announcement made by the Military Court and the Savak representative."

On its face this document is suspicious. How could a man be shot twice in the forehead while making his escape from prison? Why are the places of the "accident" and of death not given? The Savak would not even bother to concoct detailed stories to cover up what it did.

The case of Jazani and the eight other prominent political prisoners shot that April day in 1975 is not unusual. Most of the fifty Savak autopsy reports in the possession of *The Nation* ascribe death to bullet wounds sustained while the victims were attempting to "escape." And most of these bullet wounds are found in the chest and forehead—which would lead an independent observer to conclude that these people were executed before a firing squad. Many of the documents—including the one reproduced in these pages—describe "bruises" and "abrasions of the chest, belly, right hand and both legs." One of the autopsy reports of a female prisoner states that "malnutrition" was the cause of death.

After February 1979, the revolution was able fully to decipher even the most cryptic documents with the aid of public confessions by admitted Savak agents. In the case of Jazani, Bahman Tehrani, a Savak officer, disclosed to a nationally televised revolutionary court hearing that he was part of a four-man firing squad that shot Jazani and the other eight prisoners point-blank outside the Evin prison. The tale of escape, he admitted, had been concocted by the Savak to avoid arousing the people.

The Savak metamorphosed language into something other than its meaning. When no bullet holes were found in a body, a full description of the mutilated figure was given, but the following words were added: "The cause of death will be determined later." Pieces of the deceased body and blood of the deceased, taken directly from his heart, were sent to the laboratory. The corpse, however, was sent to the cemetery and buried. In the revolutionary courts, agents of the Shah's regime reported that these victims had been tortured to death. Fellow prisoners confirmed the causes of these deaths.

In the courts, hundreds of victims testified against their former torturers. These scenes reminded this spectator of Shakespeare's *Richard III* when ghosts appear to torment the King with questions. The anguished cries of the Iranian victims in court resembled those uttered by Shakespeare's ghosts—in spirit, if not literally: "Don't you remember you raped me?" "Don't you remember how you hung me upside down?" "Don't you remember how I begged you not to whip me?"

The documents dealing with women have a kind of tongue-in-cheek black humor. The vagina and rectum were examined. In all cases, except one where the woman is 28 years old and "perhaps" had a husband, that is what is written: "The virginity was examined. It is undamaged. The rectal muscle is undamaged, and has the natural condition of rectum after death."

This is not an incident lifted from Jerzy Kozinski's novel *The Painted Bird*. This is the Savak. We know from recollections of Ashraf Dehqani, one of Iran's best-known female political prisoners, that women were raped in prison. On one occasion, I was taken out of the Komite prison to

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Reza Rezaie

Sourour Alad-Push

Bahman (Ali-Asqar) Roohi-Ahangaran

Nour-Al-Din Shahsafdari

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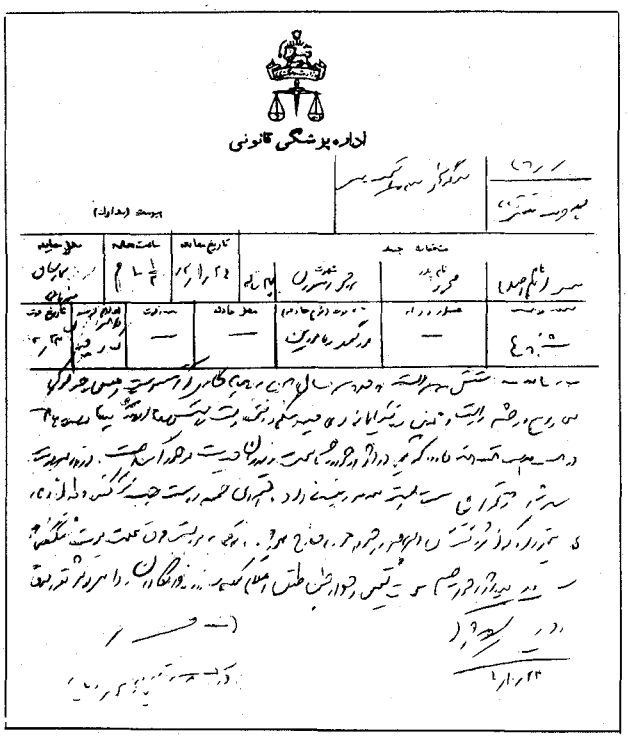
the adjacent police headquarters to see my wife. On guard that day in the room where we met our relatives was Dr. Rassouli, a much dreaded torturer. I overheard a 13-year-old girl tell her father in low tones: "Rassouli is the man who raped me."

Savak used language as a means of dissimulation and evasion, to conceal the truth. Only a revolution could bring that truth to light. The documents in *The Nation*'s possession record with chilling clarity who fought against the Shah and made the revolution a reality. Most of the martyrs are quite young, between 20 and 30 years old. There is perhaps only one person above 40. On the corner of some of the documents or the attached photos there is a terse statement which reads: "Member of the Organization of the People's Fedayeen," or "Member of the Organization of People's Crusaders." These two organizations, one Marxist-Leninist and the other built on a leftist radical approach to Islam, draw equally from an honor roll of martyrs. These men and women and their followers fought indomitably against the Shah, his Savak and the army. Most Savak torturers agreed in court that the names of these two organizations inspired them with awe, fear and admiration. To break their members under torture was an almost impossible task.

I witnessed members of these two organizations fighting in the revolution. Their example inspired great hope. When one of them appeared, people showered him with kisses, opened the way for him and his weapons as he ran toward his destiny, a confrontation with an army equipped to the teeth by the Americans. The garrisons, the radio and television stations, the palaces of the Shah and those of his generals, advisers and ministers, the police and Savak headquarters fell one by one until the entire edifice collapsed and the revolution had conquered.



Reproduced above is one of the documents received by The Nation.

Ministry of Justice
Office of Medical Examiner

Place of exam.: Police hospital — Cause of death: fracture of skull and brain damage

Time of exam.: 10:30 a.m. — M.E.: Dr. Qorbani
Date of exam.: 24/10/54 (Dec. 4, 1975) — Interrogator: Colonel Azodi-Qajar

Specifications of the deceased: — Name: Bahman (Ali-Asqar) Roohi-Ahangaran
Age: about 27

Permit No. 5
Nature of accident: confrontation with the officers
Date of death: 23/10/54
Place of accident: —— Place of death: ——
Reported by: Army Interrogation Office & Counter-insurgency Committee

Autopsy Report: The body belongs to a man of about 27. Preliminary examination did not show any sign of poison or suffocation. The eye is bruised. There are abrasions of the chest, belly, right hand and both legs. There are several bruises on the right-hand side of the chest and both legs. In autopsy of the head the scalp was opened; a vast bruise on the right side of head and forehead was located. The skull has a fracture of about 3 centimeters on the left from which brain and blood are flowing out. Thus the cause of death is fracture of the skull and brain damage, and the permit is released according to the report of the Counterinsurgency Committee and Army's Interrogation Office.

Dr. Qorbani — Colonel Azodi-Qajar

Above: an English translation of the same document.

On the second day of the revolution there was blood on the fourth floor of the building belonging to the daily newspaper *Ettela'at*. From the fourth floor, occupied by the editorial board, the roofs of the Komite prison could be seen. Savak agents on the roof sprayed the balcony with a steady fire.

A young man in arms, belonging to one of the two organizations mentioned earlier, climbed the ladder to reach the balcony of the fourth floor. He was shot by an agent from the roof of the prison, but he managed to reach the balcony before he died. The members of the editorial board hid behind the walls.

Another young man entered the office and quickly crawled to the balcony, took the rifle and crept back into the large silent room. "Who are you?" asked a member of the editorial board. "I am the brother of the man who died on the balcony." "What's your name?" the member of the board asked. "I got no name, my brother had no name either." "What shall we do with the body?" the journalist asked. "I don't know, bury him. What I need is his rifle, not his body."

In a recent TV interview with David Frost, the deposed Shah of Iran claimed that he had not been aware of the torture of political prisoners in his country during his long reign. Since he had no knowledge of torture, he plaintively asked, how could he be held culpable for what went on in his prisons? But the Shah immediately contradicted himself by saying that his henchmen stopped torturing people in 1976. By this admission, the Shah is responsible for more than thirty years of systematic torture.

If justice is to be done, the Shah should be placed on trial in the same court that tried Bahman

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Tehrani, the Savak officer who confessed on Iranian television that he had not only tortured on orders from Parviz Sabeti, deputy director of Savak, but that he also pushed poisonous capsules into the mouths of the Shah's victims and machine-gunned them within the four walls of the prison, later claiming he had shot them because they were running away. The poisoning ritual was as simple as the shooting affair. He took his prisoner for a walk in the prison compound, speaking to him kindly and pretending that very soon he would be released. Then Tehrani would grab the neck of his victim, open his mouth and push the capsule in. In less than half an hour the prisoner was dead.

In another instance, the Shah's hireling was called in 1975 by his chief and friend, the infamous torturer Hossinzadeh, to the Hotel America, a popular hotel and restaurant complex across from the American Embassy in Teheran. There, four other torturers joined them. After having the rich traditional Iranian *chelo-kobah* (a meat and rice dish) for lunch, they rode out to the northwestern outskirts of the city, where the dreaded Evin prison is located. Once within the walls of the prison, they were each given a machine gun. Then nine men were brought out of their cells and taken somewhere outside the prison to be shot. These were Iran's most outstanding political prisoners, including Bizhan Jazani, whose autopsy, mentioned previously, attributes his death to "confrontation with officers while escaping prison." "What did you do?" asked the judge of the accused in the court proceedings. "Believe me, the other agents were the first to shoot, I was the last one to take a shot at them." The nine had previously been severely tortured to make them into "royalists" but since this treatment had not proven successful, they were shot point-blank in the head.

Six-year-old children were tortured to betray the identity of their parents' guests. I speak of horrors I saw with my own eyes or was told about. Women were given electric shocks with prods placed in their private parts. A woman screamed in cell 22 of the first ward of the Komite prison for more than ten hours, crying "The electric prods have dried my breasts, give me a glass of milk to feed my baby!" A young man by the name of Mohammad-Ali Shahbazi underwent torture for more than twenty hours for nine days without telling the Savak who it was that passed to him an "illegal book" to read. A guard in the Komite prison told me that the body of a young man who weighed no more than 60 pounds lay in the torture chamber of the second floor of the Komite. Earlier he had been in my cell for a few brief moments. In one instance I carried to the men's room the half-scorched body of a prisoner who had undergone what might be called "purification by fire." Afterward he hated the smell and sight of food with meat in it. It reminded him of the smell of his own flesh. I also met a worker who had been raped by a torturer under the pseudonym of Ardalan.

Certainly the Shah was not so grandiose and evilly imaginative as Hitler in devising schemes for the collective slaughter of millions of men and women. But his plans matched the vision of a Dante when he imagined the *Inferno*. The Komite prison was one of those infernos. Handcuffed and blindfolded, mutilated, wounded both physically and spiritually, stricken with massive paralysis, the prisoners crawled from their cells to the toilets to the torture chambers and back to their cells.

The scale of torment was staggering. At least half a million people have once in their lifetimes been beaten, whipped or tortured by the Savak. In every household there is at least one person who was interrogated by the Savak. Knowledge of the torture of Iranians was not confined to the Iranians themselves. Amnesty International, the International League for Human Rights, the American branch of PEN, many religious and humanitarian organizations and scores of journalists around the world described and documented the tortures in the Shah's jails. But the White House, the State Department, the Shah and his ambassadors denied all allegations of torture.

Efforts were made by many Americans to involve President Carter in the campaign for release of political prisoners in Iran. In 1977, the Freedom to Write Committee of the American Branch of PEN wrote to the White House, asking Carter to accept a delegation of such prominent American authors as Arthur Miller, Edward Albee, Richard Howard and several others, who would tell Carter about the plight of Iranian intellectuals and writers. Included among these intellectuals were the names of two distinguished clergymen-authors, the Ayatollah Taleghani and the Ayatollah Montazeri, who both became Friday prayer leaders in Teheran after the revolution at the bidding of the Ayatollah Khomeini.

Carter refused to accept the delegation or a plea on behalf of prominent Iranians in prison. He also refused to comply with the frequent and persistent demand of the Iranian opposition abroad to stop supporting the Shah's dictatorial regime. Instead, Carter kept giving the Shah thousands of canisters of tear gas and plenty of counterinsurgency weapons. He even placed telephone calls to the Shah to boost his morale at a time when he was busy massacring the Iranian people in the streets. He not only received the Shah in the White House but even flew to Teheran and spent the eve of the New Year (1978) in the dictator's palace.

In the eyes of many Iranians, particularly the Ayatollah Khomeini, Carter's human-rights policy was a hypocritical ploy aimed at defending American stooges at the expense of a tormented and impoverished people. America's military equipment killed—both directly and indirectly. How then could the people of Iran forget what they see as the complicity of the U.S. Government in their thirty-six years of suffering under the Shah? □

AGAINST THE DRAFT?

The Nation will assist student groups and others planning public forums on draft registration by arranging for speakers and making available at bulk rates reprints of Bertram M. Gross's comprehensive article, "The Drive to Revive the Draft" (10 copies, $5; 50 copies, $20; 100 copies, $30; 500 copies, $100). Write Neil Barsky at *The Nation*.

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IN DEFENSE OF ABSCAM

Entrapment, Where Is Thy Sting?

STEPHEN GILLERS

Civil liberties are strengthened when powerful people get in trouble and discover the Bill of Rights. This is nicely illustrated by revelations of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Abscam operation. There are complaints about entrapment and unfair publicity. *The New York Times* does a story on the entrapment defense alongside the story revealing the allegations of wrongdoing. *Times* columnist William Safire finds a new reason to attack the Justice Department, in clever but misleading quips. Senator Adlai Stevenson 3d announces an investigation of the F.B.I. Law enforcement certainly can make for strange bedfellows.

Consensual crimes like bribery and drug dealing do not announce themselves. The bribe-taker, like the drug-seller, does not send invitations to the cops to come and photograph the crime in progress. The use of undercover police and informers is essential to the solution, indeed to the discovery, of these offenses. Whatever we may think of the use of undercover agents when the "crimes" they investigate impinge on First Amendment rights—crimes associated with demonstrating and organizing for example—their use raises entirely separate questions in true criminal situations.

Official corruption in the legislature, the judiciary or other government bodies is particularly sheltered because the people who engage in it do so far from public view—in private offices or exclusive restaurants and clubs—and because corrupt officials are often powerful, causing police to hesitate even to make inquiry. When they do, they often go out of their way to be polite. So add these other facts—sheltered offenders, powerful people—to the consensual nature of the offense and it is easy to understand the problems law enforcers face in uncovering official corruption. When they attempt undercover solutions to these problems, entrapment is charged.

What is entrapment? Different courts define it in different ways, some more generously for the defendant, some less. Essentially, it is a defense to a criminal charge which asserts that the offender, though he may have done the bad deed, was enticed to do it by a government agent *and* was not inclined to do it otherwise. This second part of the test is often overlooked by defense lawyers and defendants taking their case to the TV cameras. It is no defense to a criminal charge that the government made it possible to commit it if the offender was ready and willing to commit the crime when the right set of circumstances arose.

Separate from the issue of entrapment is the matter of police practices. We may conclude, whether or not a defendant has been entrapped, that as a matter of policy we do not want the F.B.I. or other law-enforcement groups randomly going about tempting citizens with the chance to commit a remunerative, ostensibly undiscoverable crime. It is likewise unseemly for the F.B.I. to lure members of Congress and see if anyone succumbs. The fact that a few may succumb is not, I think, a valid reason to attempt to seduce all.

But that apparently is not what happened here. The F.B.I. appears to have received information that particular Congressmen were corrupt and this information provided probable cause to justify further investigation. If this is not so—that is, if the information did not provide probable cause to suspect particular Congressmen—then it is the view of many civil libertarians that the use of undercover tactics violates the Fourth and possibly the First Amendment. But this is not the law and our lawmakers ought to note it well. The events of the last three weeks might prompt them to create a warrant requirement for undercover operations, at least where it is feasible to secure one.

Assuming there was probable cause to continue the investigation (in which case it would have been an abuse to fail to), what do you do next? You can't phone up and ask. You

DRAWINGS BY FRANCES JETTER

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can't expect much cooperation from former bribe-givers, assuming you can find them. They were participants in, not victims of, the offense. The victim is the public. Therefore, once an official has been identified by sufficient credible information as being corrupt, at times the best, sometimes the only, way to find out if the information is true is to use undercover agents.

What about the contention that the pre-indictment leaks to the press of damaging allegations uncovered in the investigation, together with the names of the persons under scrutiny, were improper? (See "The Abscam Caper," *The Nation*, February 16.) Such publicity is unfortunate, to be sure, and carries an element of unfairness because persons presumed innocent are now under a cloud with no ready way to counter the charges except feeble denials. (Even strong denials sound feeble in these cases.) But these are consequences that inhere in the administration of criminal law. The Attorney General should investigate the leaks and punish them, but if indictments result, the targets of the inquiry are not appreciably worse off than they would be if there had been no leaks.

It must be recognized that many, perhaps most, criminal investigations become public to some extent prior to indictment. If they do not, it is generally because secrecy aids the government, not the suspect. The grand jury proceeding itself remains secret, but the fact of the inquiry and aspects of it can and do become known, often from persons called before the grand jury as witnesses, who are not prohibited from revealing what they were asked. In the Abscam cases, even if secrecy had been maintained until indictments issued, the targets would not necessarily have benefited. In fact, some may feel they would have been put at a disadvantage. Knowing in advance gives their lawyers greater time to plan and do their own investigations. It also prevents the Bureau from gathering more evidence without the suspect's knowledge.

Once indictments issue, the targets will be in pretty much the same situation they are now—faced with a serious charge which will receive national attention and with no forum in which to counter it until trial. This is a burden thousands of suspects live with every day. Indeed, many suspects prefer this burden over an actual trial, which they do their best to delay.

If there are no indictments, the subjects of the inquiry will have been accused publicly with no chance formally to vindicate themselves. Revelation would be an end in itself. This is serious, but hardly unusual. The press often reports on criminal investigations that eventually lead nowhere. Consider the current investigation of Hamilton Jordan, which may or may not result in a charge; the accusation against Treasury Secretary G. William Miller and the examination of Carter's campaign financing by Special Counsel Paul Curran. Of course, if confidentiality can be maintained, it should be. There is no issue here. The Justice Department does not dispute the impropriety of unnecessary disclosure. The leaks were not officially inspired (or at least no one has given any reason to believe so) and so the primary legal question is whether they were prejudicial to any prospective defendants. The courts, if it comes to it, will consider that question.

There is a double standard of criminal justice in the nation as to who gets investigated, who gets charged, who gets tried and who goes to jail. People in power are rarely solicitous of the rights of the accused until they or others like them become the accused. We hear no talk about coddling criminals then. Rather, the system is forced to cross every "t" and rights are heavily emphasized. I don't reject this help because I believe the Bill of Rights does not treat people differently in these matters if they are wealthy and powerful than it does if they are poor and weak. But sometimes cries of victimization begin to sound a little ridiculous. □

A Rejoinder

PAUL CHEVIGNY

The Federal Bureau of Investigation can't win with the liberal establishment it seems. We spent the last fifty years and more criticizing the Bureau for wasting public money chasing two-bit gangsters and political radicals. Now when the F.B.I. mounts Abscam against that most "organized" of crimes, political corruption, we scream as loud as ever. *The Nation* editorial "The Abscam Caper" of February 16 says the caper shows "that the Bureau's regard for constitutional rights has not improved" under the leadership of Director William Webster.

One of the few things that can be clearly said about the Abscam caper at this point is that we can't tell whether anyone's constitutional rights were violated. Activities similar to the ones described by the newspapers as part of the caper have repeatedly been held by the Supreme Court in recent years to be proper and constitutional law-enforcement methods. It is very likely that the F.B.I. is not the proper target of our wrath; the Bureau may only have responded to the signals it received from its critics and the courts over the past ten years.

Stephen Gillers, who yields to none in his strictures on F.B.I. activities, recognizes that we critics of the F.B.I. helped to give those signals, and he has had the grace to support the Bureau's response. The Feds have done just what we always said they ought to do: they have gone after the people in power instead of dissenters, and they may have done so in a way that has the imprimatur of the courts. Why are we still complaining? Do liberals have their own double standard for the F.B.I.?

As stories have emerged over the past fifteen years about the practices of law-enforcement agencies in offering opportunities for crime (whether they amount to entrapment in

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the technical sense or not), a chief concern has been that the focus was on "political" people. That used to be a code-word for Catholic pacifists, the Vietnam Veterans Against the War, Black Panthers and assorted others who were convicted or acquitted, according to the vicissitudes of the venue and the criminal law, for crimes against the state in which police inducements were involved. For better or worse, the code word now extends to Republican and Democratic politicians. But the danger remains the same: the power to offer a temptation to crime is the power to decide who shall be tempted. It can be and often has been used as a way for the Government to eliminate its enemies, or for one faction in Government to get rid of another. Put simply, the question raised by actions like Abscam is: Can we leave it to the investigators to decide which politician to tempt? The temptation may be "legal," it may be "constitutional"—and it may also be discriminatory. That is exactly the reason I think that the law ought to require that officers employing such temptations should first go before a judge and obtain a warrant.

If it takes the arrest of its own members to drive home this point to Congress, then Abscam will perhaps have served its purpose in history. But in fact Abscam shows the policy problem inherent in all government temptations to crime, writ large for all to read. The central evil of entrapment is discriminatory law enforcement, whether the police zero in on a "politician" or a "drug dealer." The act of selecting a subject for temptation is always, even at a minor level, a political act.

Abscam thus inevitably raises basic questions about proper controls over investigative techniques. The premature leak of information about the investigation presents a much simpler problem. It is a bad thing from any point of view. There seem to be only two possible reasons for the leak. On the one hand, it could have been done to torpedo the investigation, giving Congress a chance to head it off and giving the targets a chance to wail that they had been tried in the press. On the other, it could have been done in the belief that nothing would come of the investigation when it was presented to the prosecutor. Either reason is inexcusable. If the accused are guilty, then Congress ought not to be given a chance to rally round them; if there is not sufficient evidence to warrant action by the prosecutor, then they ought to be let alone. Even a jaundiced eye like mine can perceive that being a candidate for office does not automatically make one a candidate for the penitentiary.

Finally, the power to tempt into crime and then to leak the story is a particularly potent combination. Once the authorities have selected the target of their investigation, they can make the charge "stick" in the press, regardless of how much temptation was offered, regardless of whether the courts would recognize a defense, and regardless of the reason the victim was chosen. □

COMING UP: Clancy Sigal on freedom and libel in Britain; Penny Lernoux and Clifford Krauss on Nicaragua.

DE LA MADRID'S REVENGE

The Short, Feisty Life of ABC

LAURIE BECKLUND

Shortly after midnight on November 2, 1979, some 200 burly members of a Mexican Government-controlled labor union converged on the office of Tijuana's only independent newspaper, *ABC*, declared a strike, and shut down the audacious, two-year-old daily.

The closure of *ABC* signified the most glaring attack on the freedom of the press in Mexico since then-President Luis Echeverria engineered the ouster of Mexico's best-known journalist, Julio Scherer, from the editorship of the influential Mexico City daily *Excélsior* in 1976. In both cases the editorial voice of the newspapers was silenced under the guise of labor disputes, thereby blunting the editors' ability to seek constitutional redress.

The strike was merely the final blow in a four-month battle that included attempts by two disaffected *ABC* stockholders to oust controversial editor Jesus Blancornelas, an advertising boycott by the local Chamber of Commerce, the barring of *ABC* reporters from state functions and an almost comical smear campaign run by a Government-owned daily that labeled Blancornelas everything from a rapist to a Ku Klux Klan member.

Blancornelas, who at 43 is Baja California's most savvy political writer, lays the blame for the closure of his newspaper squarely on Baja California Gov. Roberto de la Madrid, an English-speaking politician well known on both sides of the border. De la Madrid denies that he or his administration in any way intervened in what he has called an "internal labor dispute." In either case, as *The San Diego Union* later editorialized, it must be assumed, given the pyramidal structure of Mexican politics, that *ABC* was shut down at the very least "with the acquiescence of the Government of Baja California."

The press, both in California and Mexico City, protested the demise of *ABC*, but to little avail. When the red-and-black strike banner was removed ten days after the strike was declared, *ABC* reopened with a new staff. The old editorial staff refused to sign on with a union they had occasionally denounced in their news columns as controlled and corrupt. In their places, sometimes using typewriters they had bought with their own money, were reporters from other local newspapers. A former press secretary to de la Madrid was assignment editor. One of de la Madrid's personal attorneys turned up as a stockholder in *ABC*'s parent company. And one of the Governor's closest friends report-

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edly had bought the leased quarters of the newspaper itself. Two prominent lawyers have volunteered to represent the ousted journalists in filing eleven different lawsuits designed to restore the newspaper to them. But the suits have not been adjudicated. "We believe there is justice in Mexico," one of the attorneys said. "But at the moment in Baja California it is controlled by the Governor."

The ousted editorial staff of *ABC* managed, briefly, to publish a single-page flier, also called *ABC*. Since then, Blancornelas and co-stockholder Hector Felix, the most widely read political humorist in the state, have been searching for someone or some institution to lend them money to set up a new publication without demanding a share in the ownership or a voice in the editorial policy. Because circulation of the new *ABC* has plummeted and no one will buy their shares, the two have lost what once amounted to tens of thousands of dollars in an enterprise they built.

Founded on January 10, 1977, with $20,000 and a handful of young reporters, *ABC* quickly drew attention on both sides of the border with its muckraking exposés of government officials. Originally a four-page tabloid, it grew rapidly to a circulation of nearly 50,000. At its demise the old *ABC* was the largest newspaper in the city of 800,000 people and one of the ten or fifteen largest newspapers in Mexico, complete with three sections that included traditional sports and society coverage.

Its first investigative series blasted then-gubernatorial candidate Gen. Hermenegildo Cuenca Diaz, a former defense minister named to the candidacy by Echeverria, for failing to meet minimum legal residency requirements for the job. In a precedent-setting move, the paper reported on attempts by Cuenca Diaz to bribe the paper into conforming with his candidacy. *ABC* also spurned the common practice of negotiating with candidates at the outset of campaigns the price they would charge for constant coverage.

Another novel practice of the paper was giving equal space to all legitimate political parties during election campaigns. That policy was greeted by members of Mexico's single ruling party, the Institutional Revolutionary Party, as anti-Government, and by some of the paper's supporters as admirable, but futile and more than a little foolhardy.

De la Madrid owes his office to his close personal friendship with President José Lopez Portillo. He came into the governorship a popular man on both sides of the border. However, his access to the President drew immediate resentment from Mexico City power brokers who began writing him off as the "gringo Governor," or, more simply, "Bob." Completely bilingual, blue-eyed, a tennis player, and schooled partly in San Diego, de la Madrid was welcomed by officials and businessmen in the United States as the "man who understands us." With a greater gut-level understanding of the American mentality than many high-ranking Mexican foreign diplomats, he has often acted as quiet go-between for U.S. dignitaries seeking meetings with Lopez Portillo and other top officials. In 1976, he was Lopez Portillo's personal emissary to the U.S. Republican and Democratic nominating conventions.

ABC began "attacking"—"attack" is the word often used in Mexico for investigative reporting—shortly after de la Madrid named his Cabinet. *ABC* reporters did a tally of the more than 100 high-level state officials and found that no fewer than twenty-six were related in one way or another to the Governor. In a red-flag headline, it promptly denounced him for nepotism. *ABC* reporters later wrote that de la Madrid had purchased four private airplanes with Government funds, an allegation the Governor denied. When de la Madrid and U.S. Attorney Michael Walsh in San Diego announced a bilateral program to round up undocumented alien smugglers, *ABC* followed up with several stories that charged the Governor's state judicial police had arrested the small fry, torturing some of them so severely they later were hospitalized, and ignored numerous untouchable kingpins.

De la Madrid was not the only target of the troublesome *ABC* reporters. During one municipal election, *ABC* checked out voter registration lists to find many "voters" were actually deceased or did not live at the addresses listed. The paper succeeded in alienating virtually every politician in the state when it began publishing regular balance sheets of promises made, and not kept, and of federal funds authorized but never spent for programs that failed to materialize.

Blancornelas, who published a best-selling political novel in 1978, gradually became a prominent figure in his own right. A frequent speaker at journalistic functions in Mexico City and later in San Diego, he has been an outspoken critic of the Mexican national press. Last summer, for example, he berated the national press for suddenly dropping its protest of the unsolved assassination of an investigative reporter from Sinaloa after Government propagandists began circulating rumors that the writer, who specialized in narcotics and crime, was a bigamist, a murderer and more. The murder of reporters in Mexico, while hardly commonplace, does occur. One dissident reporter was killed under suspicious circumstances in the southern state of Oaxaca only last summer. Most often, however, newspapers are owned by pragmatic publishers who have close ties with the Government and "auto-censor," as some Mexican journalists term it.

Soon de la Madrid and other savvy politicians and businessmen, many of whom had often leaked stories to *ABC* to suit their own purposes, began to feel that the paper was threatening the credibility of the entire government-entrepreneurial power structure. "Negative" stories about Mexico were appearing with increasing frequency not only in Mexico City, where some *ABC* reporters acted as stringers, but also in the United States.

The first inkling of an apparent effort to do away with *ABC*, or at least its news policy, came last summer when the editor was out of town on vacation. Columnists for *El Mexicano* and *Ultimas Noticias*, both federally owned business operations, began a still continuing smear campaign. One column suggested that *ABC*, which had translated into Spanish and printed a series on Mexico published earlier by *The Los Angeles Times*, was being subsidized by

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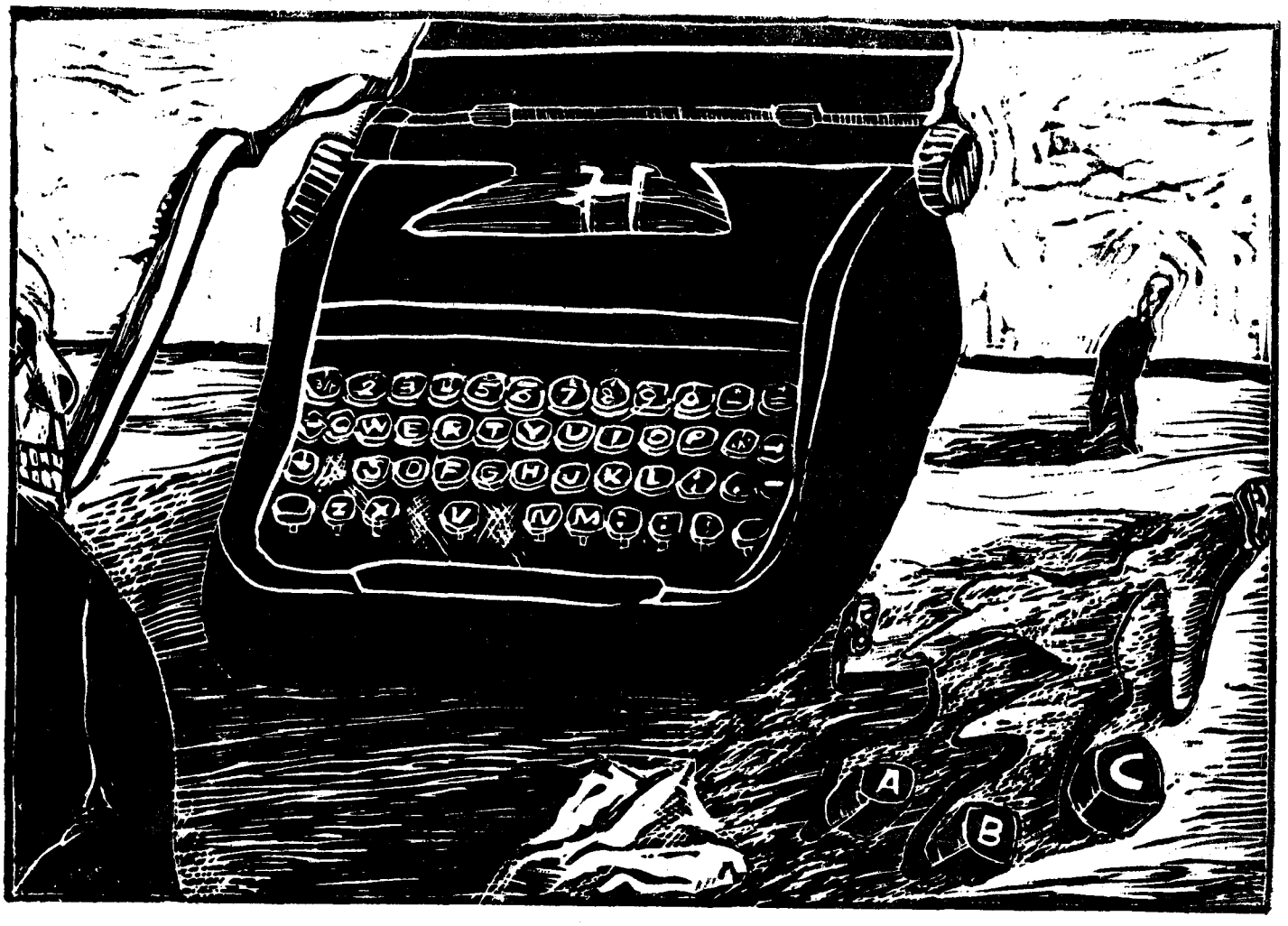
the Central Intelligence Agency as part of a conspiracy to criticize Mexico. The "Yankee Press," the conservative newspaper suggested, was led by *Times* publisher Otis Chandler, who was seeking revenge on Mexico for taking away large tracts of land his grandparents had once owned in northern Mexico. The smear campaign accelerated, and the assaults grew viciously personal. One columnist suggested that Blancornelas and Felix were involved in a love triangle. Obscene graffiti suggesting the two were homosexuals appeared almost simultaneously on walls in Tijuana. A few days later, the same columnist intimated that Blancornelas had raped three *ABC* secretaries, which was curious, considering that the paper had only one. In later columns, Blancornelas appeared as a lunatic, a C.I.A. agent and a Mafioso involved in organizing illegal cock fights.

Foreshadowing things to come, one columnist began to raise questions about *ABC*'s remaining two stockholders, who held the majority of shares. However, this time the comments were favorable. Given the sound business judgment of the stockholders, who oversaw the advertising and business side of *ABC*'s operation, the columnist asked, why did they let two radicals rule the roost?

Two weeks later, the same day that Blancornelas returned from vacation, he was served a court order signed by the two partners ordering him to hold a stockholders' meeting for the purpose of removing him as chairman of the board of *ABC* and choosing a new director. The court order was the first of two legal actions taken by the partners against Blancornelas and Felix, and was quickly followed by eleven countersuits brought by the writers against their former partners. Accusations between the battling pairs of partners have grown so bitter it is difficult to say what provoked the original schism.

But it was the labor issue, not the court battles, that ultimately closed down the old *ABC*. Six of the newspaper's more than fifty employees, who had never been unionized, called on the Government-controlled union, the Confederation of Mexican Workers (C.T.M.), to organize them. The six were relatives or close friends of the two disaffected partners. The majority of the remaining employees, including all the editorial staff, petitioned the state for the right to form their own union. The petition was denied. When C.T.M.'s buses rolled up to the *ABC* office before dawn on November 2, hoping to find the office empty, they were greeted by U.S. journalists who photographed and documented the seizure of the building. *ABC* reporters, far outnumbered, left peacefully. None of the C.T.M. members were employees of *ABC*. Ten days later, despite a federal restraining order prohibiting any stockholders' meeting, Blancornelas was removed as chairman of the board and the C.T.M. contract was signed.

Newspapers and major magazines in Mexico took up the cause and paid for full-page advertisements condemning the takeover. The remainder of Tijuana's own dailies, except



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for the Government-owned papers, remained silent. Blancornelas had once procured a list of local reporters who received a weekly stipend from the Mayor and had long before threatened to publish it if they attacked *ABC*. Key Mexico City columnists took advantage of the situation to criticize the Governor and, in isolated cases, to deliver oblique blows to the Governor's friend, Lopez Portillo.

Blancornelas credits U.S. journalists with keeping the controversy alive. On November 17, the often conservative Sigma Delta Chi, a society of professional journalists, voted to condemn the shutdown of *ABC*, sending a letter to Lopez Portillo that declared, "The closure of the newspaper was a matter of political contrivance rather than an alleged labor dispute." The activist Council on Hemispheric Affairs in Washington took advantage of a visit by Lopez Portillo to publicly condemn the move. Amnesty International also has taken an interest in the case, but is limited by its bylaws from acting unless one of *ABC*'s writers should be jailed or physically abused.

Although de la Madrid has largely avoided questions from the U.S. press on the *ABC* affair, he has said in Mexican interviews that he considers Blancornelas a good journalist who is badly informed. "The only resentment I could have against him is that he has given false information about me on purpose to foreign journalists so that they can . . . use it to attack Baja California and our country. I believe that is not right."

Blancornelas has publicly thanked U.S. reporters for their attention, claiming that, had the controversy arisen farther from the border (and in a state ruled by a Governor less religious, perhaps, than the Catholic de la Madrid), he might not be alive. Aware that he would undoubtedly be blamed if anything should happen to Blancornelas, de la Madrid has assigned full-time bodyguards to the unemployed editor. The bodyguards, however, also take notes on Blancornelas's guests, his trips and, when possible, his conversations.

There is also a distinct possibility that the controversial editor will go to jail. Recent columns in *El Mexicano* and in the new *ABC* have alleged that Blancornelas, as chairman of the board, had embezzled thousands in company funds. An accounting team hired by the attorney-stockholder friendly to the Governor is completing an audit. The accusation seems ironic, however, in that one of the accusing partners was treasurer of the company during the period in question. Blancornelas lives frugally in a tiny two-bedroom apartment with his wife and three sons.

This is not the first time he has lost control of a newspaper. He once edited *La Voz de la Frontera*, a major Mexicali paper that was bought out by the Governor who preceded de la Madrid. He lost that job after he criticized the Governor in print. Later he set up his own small newspaper with an old friend who had been editor of *El Mexicano*. The two split in 1977, after serious disagreements on political stories, and Blancornelas went on to found *ABC*. He is now thinking of starting a semiweekly newspaper which would specialize in in-depth reporting, and, he hopes, will be dependent on circulation rather than on advertising—not to mention the pleasure of government functionaries. □

THE BOYS OF '48

The A.D.A.'s Long Shadow

JOHN S. ROSENBERG

Long before their convention in Washington, the liberals of Americans for Democratic Action were turning away from the President. "We not only face defeat if he heads the ticket," warned a promising young Democrat from Minnesota, "we face a disintegration of the whole social-democratic bloc in this country." A party matriarch with a magic name hesitated to support him "because he has been such a weak and vacillating person and made such poor appointments in his Cabinet and entourage." And a front-page editorial in *The New Republic* declared that "on issue after issue the President has surrendered, first to one group, then to another, taking no stand or reversing his stand. . . ."

These complaints are familiar, but that editorial appeared under the headline: "As a Candidate for President, Harry Truman Should Quit." The matriarch was Eleanor Roosevelt; the young Democrat, Hubert Humphrey; and the year, 1948. That year, like this, the liberals sought strong, charismatic leadership—but they turned not to a Kennedy but to Dwight Eisenhower. When Ike refused the A.D.A. draft, *The Progressive* observed that "A.D.A., a liberal organization which purports to be, among other things, the conscience of the Democratic Party, looked pretty silly beating the drums for a man who, for all they knew, was a rock-ribbed conservative." Also that year, like this, there was another candidate who appealed to many liberals but who was regarded by others as demagogic and even weirdly mystical—not Jerry Brown, of course, but Henry Wallace.

These amusing parallels may appear to be merely, well, history—water over the dam, tasty morsels of historical gossip—but on the contrary, they suggest that we are still living under the fallout from '48. Indeed, to describe the A.D.A. as "the oldest surviving liberal organization in the country," as *The Washington Post* did recently, is rather like describing Cain as the oldest surviving son of Adam and Eve. Without the necessity to slay the specter of "Henry Wallace and his Communists"—as Truman put it—there probably never would have been an A.D.A. at all. It was born in a fratricidal war with the remnants of the old popular front, gathered in Wallace's Progressive Party, to determine who would inherit the spiritual mantle of Franklin Roosevelt.

After its effort to dump Truman failed, the A.D.A. rallied to him like a true believer and rode the cold-war charger of anti-Communism in a vicious joust against Wallace and

John S. Rosenberg is writing a biography of Clifford Durr, who refused reappointment to the Federal Communications Commission in 1948 because of his opposition to the loyalty program.

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his sympathizers. In the name of anti-Communism the A.D.A. supported the Truman Doctrine, whereby the United States promised to aid "free peoples" threatened from outside or by "armed minorities," while the progressives (many of whom were not in the Progressive Party) accurately predicted that such a policy would make the United States an international policeman protecting right-wing dictatorships the world over. In the name of anti-Communism it supported Truman's loyalty program, while progressives accurately predicted that such a program would create a climate of fear and suspicion much more subversive of democracy than the few disloyal bureaucrats who might be discovered. In the name of anti-Communism it attacked critics of these policies as Stalinist dupes.

Individual members of A.D.A. sometimes had qualms about one or another of these stands, and the implications of some revisionist historians that cold-war liberals singlehandedly caused McCarthyism and Vietnam are simplistic. Nevertheless, the A.D.A. was more concerned about the threat of Communism than it was about the more clear and present danger—the overreaction to that threat, which led to the abridgment of civil liberties and an interventionist foreign policy that equated anti-Communism with freedom.

The major historical accomplishment of the A.D.A. was to separate the great body of liberalism from the left and deliver it to the center. As Arthur Schlesinger Jr., a founder of the A.D.A., proclaimed in the title of his 1949 manifesto, the new improved liberals had joined the "Vital Center." The spirit of liberalism, he wrote, "is the spirit of the center"; the new liberals of the middle are "the politicians, the administrators, the doers," while their hapless and pinko opponents on the left are "the sentimentalists, the utopians, the wailers." Since 1948, the A.D.A. has provided a litmus test of liberal legitimacy; anything further left was branded "irresponsible" when "subversive" went out of vogue.

Thus, although the A.D.A. now occupies the left flank of the (truncated) spectrum of respectable political opinion, it holds that position only by virtue of its victory over the popular-front liberals thirty years ago. And, to carry the irony one step further, its victory was so complete—the left wing was not clipped; it was amputated—that the center of the Democratic Party was moved noticeably to the right.

Now, once again, the A.D.A. is trying to dump a recently unpopular but determined incumbent—who, like Truman, is viewed as too small for the job—in favor of the living embodiment of liberalism's last rendezvous with destiny—not Henry Wallace and his "Gideon's Army" of tattered New Dealers but Ted Kennedy raising anew the banner of Camelot. The irony in this situation (the A.D.A. may now look like the sentimental utopian wailers of the left they once warned against) is outweighed only by the danger. Last time around, Truman, prodded by the A.D.A., shrewdly advised by Clark Clifford, turned left on economic and social issues —thus appealing to many of Wallace's natural supporters—and sharply right on foreign policy. It worked, and we have lived with the consequences through the cold-war years to the debacle in Vietnam.

With his human-rights rhetoric, his verbal sympathy for the aspirations of the Third World, his opposition to the proliferation of both conventional and nuclear weapons, and his refusal to intervene where the conventional foreign policy script would have required it, Carter gave some indication through the first three years of his term of being able to look at the world through lenses not completely fogged by thirty years of cold war. Recent events and the "Carter Doctrine" they have provoked, however, indicate that we haven't traveled far from '48 after all.

Gone is the Truman Doctrine's ideological gloss about defending "free peoples." Gone even are the qualifications of the Eisenhower Doctrine of 1957, which promised American aid to any Middle Eastern nations "requesting assistance against armed aggression from any country controlled by international Communism." The Carter Doctrine simply wraps the American flag around every sheik, sultan and potentate from Turkey to Pakistan. Apparently our intervention need not depend on such formalities as a request or an outside attack. With its militant hands-off-our-territory rhetoric and its insistence on defending people who may not want our help from an attack that may not occur, the new Carter policy resembles the Monroe Doctrine.

In fact, this "new" policy should not be dubbed the Carter Doctrine at all, but the Carter Corollary II—II, because in effect it is merely a corollary to the Theodore Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine. The Monroe Doctrine told Europe to keep its hands off the Western Hemisphere; the Roosevelt Corollary announced that the United States would keep its hands in. "The adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine," asserted the hero of San Juan Hill, may force it "to the exercise of an international police power" in the hemisphere.

Carter's Corollary II simply transports Corollary I to the Persian Gulf (though it is not restricted, of course, to "republics"). But even before his return to the big-stick diplomacy of the Rough Rider and the cold-war rhetoric of the Truman Doctrine, there was a strong likelihood that future generations would regard his support for large increases in military spending and for a now defunct SALT treaty that sought parity rather than reduction in destructive force as more significant than his relative restraint and his increasingly muted pronouncements on human rights—just as today many view Truman's contributions to the cold war and domestic repression as more important than his occasional resistance to even more severe measures.

At least it can be said of Carter, as it was said of Truman, that his Republican challenger will be worse. Unlike 1948, however, the left-wing challenge has not materialized. In fact, there is good reason to suppose that the Henry Jackson/Daniel Patrick Moynihan wing of the Democratic Party would be more powerful in a new Kennedy Administration than it is now. Taking a page out of Truman's old campaign book, Jackson recently advised Kennedy (according to Evans and Novack) "to go left of the President domestically and right of him in foreign affairs."

Despite the consensus that Kennedy did "go left" in his Georgetown University speech, a close reading suggests that

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he listened to Jackson. There was a marked turn to the left on domestic policy, which the Carter campaign committee predictably criticized as "irresponsible," but the foreign policy section of Kennedy's speech reflected his need to appeal to both the hawks and the doves in his party. There was a welcome opposition to "helter-skelter militarism" and to a "reflex decision" to spend billions on unnecessary defense systems, but there was also a call for increases in military strength and a new toughness with the Russians. In short, Kennedy tried to position himself on Carter's left *and* right.

Other than his opposition to the draft, however, there is little substantive difference between Carter's new foreign policies and those Kennedy proposed. The speech was as critical of Carter's refusal to stand up to the Russians earlier as of his methods of doing so now; it objected to his unsteadiness at the helm, not the direction he is sailing. Kennedy, too, supports an increase in military strength and support to Middle Eastern kingdoms, sheikdoms and sultanates, buffered only by the soothing reminder that "military aid is not enough. We must also provide economic assistance and political support." Gen. Zia ul-Haq and his ilk must be quaking in their boots at this threat of a new Alliance for Progress aimed their way.

Despite the unsettling innuendoes about Kennedy's patriotism, provoked by his opposition to the grain embargo, Carter appears unlikely to tar his critics with Truman's well-worn "pro-Communist" brush. He has, however, called for unleashing the intelligence agencies again. And just as Truman, pointing with pride to his draconian loyalty program, accused Republicans in the "do nothing" 80th Congress of being soft on Communism, Carter is sure to remind audiences in this election year that all his opponents (save John Anderson) opposed the grain embargo, implying that they are softer on the Russians than he is. All in all, Clark Clifford, the architect of Truman's '48 campaign, must have a feeling of *déjà vu* in the White House these days.

And even if a domestic witch hunt is avoided this time, a real danger remains that Carter, reversing Truman, will turn right on other domestic issues. Kennedy will be—indeed, has been—accused of softness on Big Government if not Communism. If this strategy works as well for Carter as a similar one did for Truman—and the Iowa vote and opinion polls suggest that it might, despite Kennedy's unseemly haste in retreating toward the center and, when that failed, trying to attack Carter from both sides—the legacy of this intra-party fight may be a Democratic Party as committed to retrenchment at home as Truman's Democratic Party was abroad.

Of course there are other possibilities: Kennedy could win, and prove to be only a verbal occupant of the vital center; or Carter could realize that his only hope is to woo would-be Kennedyites with a progressive foreign and domestic policy. In the absence of any sustained criticism from the left, however, the latter seems unlikely. In any event, the foundation of today's Democratic Party, both its weakness on the left and its center-right slant, was laid in 1948, and the shades of '48 will continue to haunt this election season, and beyond. □

Carter's New Playmates in The Persian Gulf

FRED HALLIDAY

President Carter's new commitment to stand by Western interests in the Persian Gulf must come as welcome news to the assorted monarchs and military dictators on whom the beneficence of a newly assertive U.S. Administration is about to be bestowed. Some of these gentry have already attracted the skeptical attention of Western observers: neither the monarchy of Saudi Arabia nor the fervid Islamic generals of Islamabad rate high on the human-rights scales. Yet there are other less prominent rulers whose credentials may also bear some examination in the light of Washington's new claims to be defending Western values in that region, not least the Amir of Bahrain, who has proferred hospitality to the U.S. Navy since 1949, and the Sultan of Oman, who has just last week opened the door to Uncle Sam with the offer of a military base.

The Amir of Bahrain may at first sight appear a rather harmless buffoon. Sheik Isa ibn Sultan al-Khalifa, 46, is best known for his two favorite pastimes: racing horses and chasing English stewardesses, whom he invites to a private beach near his palace from which all Arab women are banned. His favorite companion is a former air hostess named Margaret who commutes regularly between London and the Bahraini capital of Manama at the Amir's expense.

But the jolly Amir has a more macabre side, concealed from many Western visitors by the appearance of prosperity and the relaxed social atmosphere in the island state. Bahrain has the longest history of education and also of political unrest among the Arab Gulf states, and since the 1950s there has been a strong movement among intellectuals and workers demanding democratic rights. In 1956, 1965 and 1970 the Government had to resort to widespread arrests to preserve the absolute power of the al-Khalifas. After becoming formally independent of Britain in 1971, Bahrain tried a limited experiment in democracy. A draft Constitution was announced, under which a highly restricted national assembly would have come into existence. The assembly was then duly elected—but only after women had been deprived of the vote promised in the Constitution draft. And when the assembly, at most only a talking shop, became too critical of the ruling family, it was unceremoniously closed down in August 1975. In the subsequent repression a number of opposition leaders were shot or tortured to

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death by the police.

The latest issue of the underground paper *Khamsa Mars* (March 5) lists the names of seventy-six people arrested in the latter part of last year for underground political activities. Some are radicals influenced by the revolution in Iran, others are members of a Trades Union Founding Committee that has been especially active among the workers at the ALBA aluminum plant, the largest industrial enterprise on the island. A world that is rightly indignant at Andrei Sakharov's deportation to a provincial town should also spare a thought for the dozens of people facing a much worse fate, and without any international protest, in one of the countries Carter has now decided to sustain so avidly.

Security in Bahrain is under the command of two long-standing British counterinsurgency experts, Ian Henderson, a veteran of the Mau Mau campaign in Kenya in the 1950s, and Maj. Gen. Jim Bell. But although the Bahrain Defense Force—the Amir's army—gets its arms from Britain, the United States has since 1949 operated a naval facility at Bahrain, which serves as the headquarters for its Middle East Force. The ships of MIDEASTFOR serve not only as an American presence in the Gulf but also carry out important communications and reconnaissance activities. Although the Government occasionally promises to terminate U.S. occupancy of the base, it has not in fact done so.

Bahrain, a country with an acute demand for liberalization, is therefore still ruled by an autocratic Amir, backed by his British myrmidons. Farther down the Gulf rules Sultan Qabus of Oman, who was installed by the British intelligence service in July 1970, in order to replace his stubborn father. Qabus has never wavered in blocking democracy, refusing even to allow the kind of token tribal assembly of majlis that is found in Saudi Arabia and the Emirates. He recently told *The Financial Times* of London that such assemblies are "an inefficient and time-wasting way of running a modern state." The result is that no democratic liberties of any kind are allowed and Qabus rules without any limits, flanked by an assortment of relatives and merchants.

Soon after coming to power Qabus began to put distance between himself and the British, and relations between him and London are now somewhat strained. The British believe that Qabus's passionate, unswerving dedication to creating a modern state (i.e., his ruthless dictatorship) may generate new popular opposition. Privately, they scorn his grandiose self-image as the man whose country guards the lifeline of the West at the twenty-six-mile Straits of Hormuz.

Qabus, for his part, takes no chances with the British, and since 1971 he has received a secret subsidy from the Central Intelligence Agency, channeled through Saudi Arabia, which enables him to run his own security force independent of the British, according to a February 3, 1972, article in the authoritative *Economist Foreign Report*. The 4,000-strong militarized police, used for counterinsurgency operations alongside the army, is the linchpin of the wary Sultan's backup self-defense system.

Power in the country is said to lie with three men. The Sultan himself doubles as Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and Foreign Minister. His chief foreign affairs aide, Qais az-Zawuawui, is an Indian-educated merchant who seems most concerned with his family's business interests. But standing in the shadows close by the Sultan is Brig. Tim Landen, the British intelligence officer who organized the 1970 coup and who has since served as Qabus's aide-de-camp.

Landen, who seems to have done very well from his association with the Sultan—he owns houses in Greece, Britain and Rhodesia—is believed to be the man responsible for organizing covert Omani support for the illegal Ian Smith regime in Rhodesia over a number of years. Reports of the Rhodesian air force training in Oman have been disputed by some sources, but there is little doubt that some supplies, including military spare parts, were flown to Rhodesia from Oman in return for imports of Rhodesian food supplies. Another English intelligence operative who plays a key role in the Sultanate is Tony Ashworth, a disinformation expert, who runs the Government's information program. Two other characters with substantial influence in Oman are Saudi-born Ghassan Shaker and a Libyan operator named Yahya Omar. Both Shaker and Omar are businessmen reliably believed to have collaborated over a number of years with the C.I.A. (See "As Espionage, Profit Meet," by Jim Hoaglund, *The Washington Post*, September 17, 1975.) Shaker helped set up the deal whereby the Vinnell Corporation supplied Saudi Arabia with U.S. training personnel, and both he and Omar rode into Oman on the coattails of former U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Robert Anderson, who helped negotiate the Qabus-C.I.A. deal back in 1971. Omar has represented a number of U.S. companies in Oman, including one that manufactures bombers and missiles, and both he and Shaker were reported to have received substantial commissions on deals they made with U.S. firms. Their standing was enhanced by the fact that they had a direct line to U.S. policy makers.

The ten years of Sultan Qabus's rule in Oman have been an unmitigated economic disaster. Oman's considerable oil revenues have been wasted—repeating and outdoing all the mistakes of the Shah of Iran. Only one significant factory has been opened in the whole period. Oman, which used to be self-sufficient in food, is now 100 percent dependent on imported rice; 90 percent of its wheat and 40 percent of its meat and vegetables are also purchased abroad. Investment has been focused almost entirely in speculative activity around the capital, Muscat, and corruption has reached grotesque proportions at the higher levels of government.

But despised as he may be by his own people, Qabus knows he can rely on his friends in London and Washington. Last year the Sultan ordered $800,000 worth of anti-tank missiles from the United States, and he is now requesting 155-millimeter artillery to meet a supposed threat from neighboring South Yemen. But as in Iran, Bahrain and so many other such countries, the real threat is not from the outside but from the seething resentment within, caused by the greed and obduracy of the ruling groups, and augmented by Western enthusiasm for these Arab Caligulas. □

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(Continued From Page 197)

Powers was chillingly correct. Once again everyone in Washington recognizes the same threat and agrees that something must be done, and they have produced the Moynihan bill and the foreign intelligence charter to keep secret the blunders and egregious excesses of the present. Hearings are scheduled to begin in the Senate intelligence committee on February 21; unless voices are raised now, the F.O.I.A. will be trampled under, along with other valuable measures—on which we will have more to say.

SYMPOSIUM.

A Peace Israel Can Live With (Cont.)

MOSHE SHAMIR

This is the seventh in a series of responses by Israelis to our questions on Palestinian statehood. —The Editors

Question: "Under what conditions would the creation of an independent Palestinian state on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip become acceptable to you?"

Answer: Put NO where the "what" is, and you get the most widely held view in Israel. There is already an independent Palestinian state—Jordan. Territorially it is part of the Palestine envisioned in the original British mandate, an organic part of the country that was intended by the League of Nations to become the Jewish homeland of the Balfour Declaration. Brutally, cynically, unilaterally, Transjordan was torn away from the land of Israel in the year 1922 by the then Colonial Secretary, Winston Churchill. Ethnically, the massive majority of the Jordanians are Palestinians.

Jordan is larger in area, richer in natural resources, stronger in international relations than Israel is or than any tiny West Bank separate state will ever be. There is one thing, though, that the inhabitants of Jordan do not enjoy: personal and political freedom. Jordan is an autocratic state, like all Arab states, be it a Communist-fascist kind of autocracy or its monarchic image. This fact is the root of all evils in the Middle East, including the total negation of all free (Israel) or semifree (Lebanon) societies in the area. The war against the Jews and their state is a direct outcome of the aggressive, belligerent, genocidal character of those reactionary, tyrannical regimes which by their very nature strive to achieve the solidification of their enslaved peoples by channeling all their thoughts and deeds against an outside "eternal enemy."

The Palestinians do not need another state, neither do they really want it. Living under a terroristic regime—the Palestine Liberation Organization—they have no chance to express their true wishes. It is only through their self-appointed, terror-supported spokesmen that we get the information about what they call "the Palestinian national aspirations."

A quick look at recent history will give us an idea of their leaders' true aims. For nineteen years (1948-67) the West Bank and Gaza were under Jordanian and Egyptian rule respectively—and there was not a single voice about a "separate Palestinian state." During those years they were closer to achieving their final aim—the destruction of Israel—and the need to conceal it was not so evident as it is today. They spoke then, simply and directly, about reconquering Israel, to be achieved by a joint military effort of the same Arab states they willingly lived under, namely Jordan and Egypt. Only after the 1967 and 1973 wars, when they realized that such a military overrunning of Israel was not possible, did the scheme of doing it in stages, by political means mainly, emerge as an acceptable interim solution. The first stage in this scheme is the establishment of a separate state in the West Bank and Gaza; the second is the good old "final solution," the total destruction of the Jewish state.

Question: "How would you like to see political accommodation with the Palestinians come about?"

Answer: There *is* a political accommodation with the Palestinians—and I like it. Those Palestinian Arabs who now live west of the River Jordan, within the framework of Israel's sovereignty—can remain where they are, co-existing with the Jews, sharing with them—as they do—the freest, the most civilized, most affluent, the most open way of life in the region. Those Palestinian Arabs who live *outside* the land of Israel, some of them as refugees, some of them as fully absorbed citizens or inhabitants of other Arab countries—should remain where they are, contributing to the so badly needed development and gradual democratization of those countries.

If the term Palestinians in this question is meant to be a euphemism for the P.L.O., I reject both the confusion and the idea. The P.L.O. is *not* the Palestinians. The P.L.O. is an organization of murder and terrorism financed, armed and led by the Soviet Union and by some Arab countries for the advancement of their own interests. The P.L.O. exploits and victimizes the Palestinians and brings upon them suffering and calamity after calamity. Admittedly, the Palestinians themselves cannot at present elect a representative political body through any form of free elections, because anybody taking part in such a process will be murdered instantly. But even clearer is the fact that supporting the P.L.O. or recognizing it as a legitimate representative of the Palestinians can only delay the awakening of a free Palestinian collective will. It is indeed a great tragedy that men of good will in the democratic countries delude themselves that appeasement of the P.L.O. can bring about a process of moderation on its part. The only way to deal with the P.L.O. is to wage war on it with the sole aim of putting an end to it—the same way one should deal with any organization of crime and destruction. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Reading, Writing and Riches

RICHARD GILMAN

What is here? Gold? Yellow, glittering, precious gold?

—Timon of Athens

There is a story told about Samuel Goldwyn and George Bernard Shaw which is most likely apocryphal, but which, if it is, was invented like so many other pieces of apocrypha to make history more satisfying than we find it. Sometime during the 1930s Goldwyn wrote to Shaw asking for the screen rights to one of his plays. He told the dramatist, perhaps the most famous living writer at the time, that he, personally, and the studio greatly esteemed his work and that they were determined to make a movie ("motion picture" is what he undoubtedly said) that would be worthy of Shaw's genius. There was no reply. Goldwyn wrote again, reiterating his reverence for Shaw and his assurances that nothing would be spared to insure that the projected film would be wholly faithful to the stage work. No reply. Goldwyn wrote a third time, nearly beside himself now with protestations of admiration and pledges of fidelity to what Shaw had created. Shaw then answered. "Let's face it, Mr. Goldwyn," he wrote, "you're interested in art and I'm interested in money."

The remark is an elegant example of Shaw's favorite literary device, the reversing of expectations, but it is more than a witticism. That writers should be interested in money can be surprising and abhorrent only to the most naïve and idealistic members of the reading public, and disconcerting only to those who, like Goldwyn, have organized their own lives around money and who—for moral contrast, for that balanced sense of the world certain materialists seem to need—would like there to be another type of person who has organized his existence around a "higher," purer value. Samuel Johnson's well-known dictum that "no man but a blockhead ever wrote except for money" may be excessive in its cynicism but it is more nearly true than the notion that serious people always write disinterestedly, for art or intellect alone, and is a corrective to the idea that to write for financial gain is somehow ignoble.

Still, there is surely a difference between writing with a desire to be paid, and even well paid, for it—a matter of simple justice, after all, as well as a practical consideration from which writers are no more likely to be exempt than anyone else—and writing with a preexisting and powerful desire to make as much money as possible, to become rich from one's words. The enormous amounts that are increasingly paid to certain cultural and political commentators, to historians, and especially to some novelists, the "stardom" that these sums both imply and help to create, together with the widening gap between these writers' financial success and that of those of their colleagues who may be of equal or greater talent —all this is, or ought to be, troubling to our sense of fitness, muddying up as it does the distinctions we continue, perhaps quixotically, to make among realms of human activity and types of reward. Virginia Woolf, who asked only that she might have a room of her own and 100 pounds sterling a year, wanted to know "what effect has poverty on fiction?" The more pressing question we might ask now is what effect does wealth have on it and on literature in general.

There is a distinction I have to make at the outset of this essay between what I have called "serious" writers and another kind. It goes without saying that the great majority of writers are unserious as that word is used in intellectual discourse, by which I do not mean that they are necessarily frivolous. The point is that there is no question of anything permanent in their work, anything original or inspiriting or revelatory, no question of any accession to culture. Most writers have careers at best, not vocations, and though a species of local and transient fame or power may be an element of their desire, the center of that is pecuniary.

There is nothing to quarrel with in this. There isn't anything morally ambiguous or intellectually problematic about the money Irving Wallace, say, or Neil Simon, earns, since for writers like that words *are* money, in a nearly exact equivalence. It would be absurd to speak of such writers as being corrupted by wealth, just as it would be absurd to speak of fiction or dramatic art being corrupted by their work. They are not artists (a word I choose to retain in the face of its enemies among the avant-garde) but professionals in the hard sense, businessmen of language, and as long as business in our society is conducted for profit it would be naïve to charge them with failing to pursue or uphold higher values, if indeed it isn't naïve these days to speak of higher values at all.

Still, I'll speak of them, or at least of values other than the material. The problem begins when we turn to those who have indeed been expected to put other kinds of good first, those who have won for themselves the designation of artist or thinker. In his reply to Goldwyn, Shaw was correcting a notion of unreasonable purity, but there can be little doubt that money was not one of his central yearnings or, if it was, that he did no real violence to his imaginative powers in order to obtain it. But is that true of our own contemporaries? And even if they remain largely unscathed, with their integrity firmly in hand, does the cultural atmosphere itself remain undisturbed by these prodigious contracts and furious races for sales? On a simple pragmatic level isn't it true, for example, that "big" novels, and I mean big *serious* novels, tend to drive out worthy smaller ones?

A little history is in order at this point. For centuries, artists and thinkers were just about the only writers there were. The professional writer in a narrow sense, the person for whom writing isn't a question of inspiration, an incremental utterance, but a trade or craft like any other, a matter of technical skill in the service of no ideal of beauty or intellectual discovery, nothing transcendent or "deeper" than ordinary experience—such a writer is a relatively recent historical personage, and the class of such persons, very much more numerous now than ever before, has always been pyramidal in shape, with a few at the highest levels of gain and a broad mass of toilers—what we call hacks—at the bottom. Its members have always practiced their trade more or less mat-

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ter-of-factly and, with the exception of an occasional case of self-delusion—an Erica Jong or an Erich Segal—with no aspirations toward immortality.

The class began to be formed in Europe several centuries ago and in America rather later, and grew swiftly in the early part of the nineteenth century, most notably in England and France, as a result of the quite sudden rise in literacy and the consequent conversion of writing into a commodity as potentially salable—and therefore as subject to the operations and laws of the marketplace—as any other product. One of the chief demands of the new market was for fiction, so that it was the imaginative writer, who before this, as a type, had usually been either a curious dreamer or a sagacious amateur of social observation, who had now to become "professional" too.

Before this, writers had wanted and needed money, to be sure, but they had either been from leisured circumstances or they had obtained support indirectly, from patrons in nearly every case, and not as an immediate result of their literary endeavors, which were in any event designed for an extremely limited audience. Patronage was not, of course, free from pressures toward corruption, subtle or otherwise, but this was rare; a surprisingly large number of patrons were highly educated and sincere in their admiration for literary art. Still, should a patron demand what a writer couldn't in conscience give, refusal was always possible. One wouldn't be hung for it, although financial difficulties would obviously supervene. In his *Essay on the Relations of Noblemen and Men of Letters,* Jean d'Alembert wrote that authors had the same right to wealth as aristocrats and certainly had no duty to be poor. But, he added, if it became necessary they ought to endure poverty in the interest of the things they were supposed to be devoted to: truth and independence.

As literacy spread and the new market took shape, literary artist and technician alike were swept into the bourgeois world of commerce. Adam Smith was among the first in England to describe the social and economic developments that had come to affect intellectual activity, although his observations were set down considerably before the true revolution had got underway. "In opulent and commercial societies," he wrote, "to think or to reason come to be, like every other employment, a particular business, which is carried on by . . . people who furnish the public with all the thought and reason possessed by the vast multitudes that labor." And he went on to say that knowledge "is purchased in the same manner as shoes and stockings, from those whose business it is to make up and prepare for the market that particular species of goods."

Some time later in France an anonymous commentator wrote in the same vein that "there are first-class objects in intelligence as in any other kind of commodity. They have their market price, like asphalt or Marseilles soap. Spiritual rates shift in the same fashion as industrial rates."

This commercialization of knowledge, whose chief agency of dissemination was literature of all kinds, including fiction, took a big step forward in the 1830s and 1840s, when there began to form, as Raymond Williams has described it in his important study, *Culture and Society*, "a large new middle-class reading public" which had to be catered to. "As a result," Williams writes, "the system of patronage . . . passed into subscription publishing, and thence into general commercial publishing of the modern kind." To take up the story where Williams leaves it, the final step was the institution of the royalty system (of which our present practice of giving advances is a refinement), usually attributed to a London publisher named Bentley who in 1885 began to pay his authors in this way. Before that time publishers and authors had worked by an arrangement of shared profits (which in all too many cases, because of various shady bookkeeping practices, meant that there were seldom any profits for marginally popular authors to share) or by the outright sale of copyright, the classic horror story here being the sale by Defoe of the rights to *Robinson Crusoe* for 10 pounds.

These changes affected the writers of all sorts of books, though perhaps most directly and severely authors of fiction, a tribe that increased rapidly during the Victorian era. It was then that a new Grub Street came into being. For a century or more there had existed, nearly invisible behind the giants of English literature, a horde of mostly anonymous writers of every description, although only a small number of them wrote fiction in the earlier years. Grub Street was a small London thoroughfare where, during the 1740s and 1750s, writers were able to find very cheap lodgings, usually with no amenities at all and in most cases without even any heating. Samuel Johnson, who knew the place well, gave it the following definition as a cultural appellation in his *Dictionary* of 1757. Since it was a street "much inhabited by writers of small histories, dictionaries and temporary poems [a wonderful phrase!] . . . any mean production is called Grub Street."

It was George Gissing who, in his novel, *New Grub Street,* published in 1891, brought the metaphor and the phenomenon up to date, beautifully describing the new desperate condition of the serious writer, most markedly the writer of fiction, cut off from patronage and struggling to make his way in the heartless commercial world of the new publishing. The Fiends of Commerce, as Blake had called them many years before, had taken command. Blake had spoken of "the desolate market where none come to buy," and in his novel Gissing vigorously sketched the nature and conditions of that market, conditions one either met or was defeated by, with scarcely any middle ground. In failing the test one wasn't simply being unsuccessful but, in all too many instances, literally reduced to starvation; to uphold the "higher" values of literature could be extraordinarily costly.

It's important to understand that at this period serious writers had almost none of the means of support that are taken for granted today. The teaching of literature was very thin and random in universities, so that such positions were available to only a handful. There were no foundations to give grants and, in England anyway, such small stipends as the Crown granted went to older writers with established reputations. As a character in *New Grub Street* remarks apropos of the plight of the young or unknown writer: "You have to become famous before you can secure the attention which would give fame."

Edward Reardon, one of the two protagonists of this undeservedly neglected book, is a novelist of moderate but authentic talent who cannot support himself and his family by his serious books and makes a desperate attempt to do it by writing potboilers. He hasn't the temperament or the shrewdness for it, however, unlike his friend and fellow writer, Jasper Milgram, a man who knows what the score, or rather the game, is. "Literature nowadays is a trade, he says, a century after Adam

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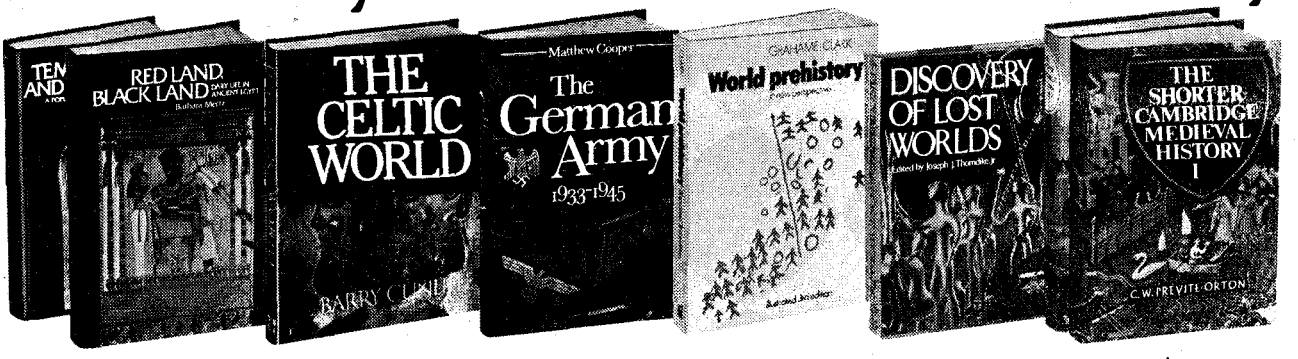

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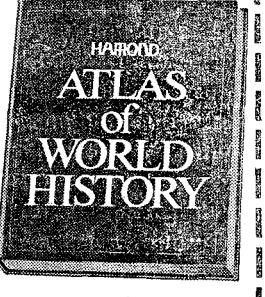

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Smith had seen it coming. "Putting aside a man of genius, who may succeed by mere cosmic force, your successful man of letters is your skilled tradesman. He thinks first and foremost of the markets; when one kind of goods begins to go off slackly, he is ready with something new and appetising. He knows perfectly all the sources of income." And he adds a cold, confident prediction about himself: "Never in my life shall I do anything of solid literary value; I shall always despise the people I write for. But my path will be that of success."

Such a stance is straightforward enough. So also is the position taken by some—although, as time went on, one would imagine increasingly fewer—serious writers, that to hope to get rich from one's books is idle, even if you do not have any moral scruples about it. At one time such scruples were more the rule than the exception. We are told that the publisher of Thomas Gray's *Elegy* made a small fortune from the extremely popular poem, a sum augmented by the fact that the poet thought it beneath his dignity as a gentleman to accept money for his "inventions." Perhaps the extreme formulation of the matter was Shelley's in his "Defense of Poetry," in which he wrote that "Poetry, and the Principle of Self, of which Money is the visible incarnation, are the God and Mammon of the world." This lofty sentiment didn't prevent the famous poet from sending, under a pseudonym, a play of his to a London theatrical manager, to whom he wrote that he hoped for a rousing financial success from it. It turned out to be unstageable.

Ambiguities, moral confusions, self-deceptions and hypocrisies of the kind exhibited by Shelley—who was prepared, he said, to acknowledge his authorship only if the play were both a financial *and* a critical success—begin to set in, or at least to proliferate, precisely when it becomes possible, because of the much expanded audience, to make a great deal of money from writing while remaining, to one's own satisfaction at any rate, serious. And now the ironies begin to swirl around the relations between art and commerce.

From early in the century, a small number of esteemed writers did indeed become wealthy. Balzac, who is said to have speculated on how much his letters would bring after his death, was one of them. At the same time, though, his great contemporary, Stendhal, made almost nothing from his books, several of them selling fewer than a hundred copies. Tolstoy added to his estates through his books, while Dostoyevsky kept a step ahead of the sheriff. Byron, who once advised his fellow writers to "never trust entirely in authorship," nevertheless found poetry highly profitable, whereas Blake went empty-handed. This situation was summed up late in the century by the critic George Saintsbury, who wrote that "there does not appear to be among the numerous fixed laws of the universe any one which regulates the proportion of literary desert to immediate reward." We know how accurate this observation remains.

The central irony that runs through the history of writing and its relation to riches in the nineteenth century doesn't stem from any principle of life's unfairness but rather from something within the self-regard of writers and in their attitudes toward the world. At the very time authors were being thrown into the marketplace, where, as I have said, a few made their fortunes while the rest struggled to one degree or another, at the same time, in other words, that writing became "commercial," a doctrine of the writer as a superior being, someone above material considerations or even bitterly opposed to them, was being promulgated and upheld. As Raymond Williams writes, "At a time when the artist is being described as a producer of just one more commodity for the market, he is describing himself as a specially endowed person, the guiding light of the common life."

Now the artist, particularly the writer as seer, light bringer or Shelley's unacknowledged legislator, is a romantic notion and, like so much of romanticism in its cultural modes, it was the product in large part of a reaction to and revulsion from industrialism, the ascendancy of the material in human affairs. There was no more eloquent voice of denunciation and dismay in regard to this than Baudelaire's, who called the newly powerful middle classes "fanatics of utensils" and "enemies of perfume" and thereby set the tone for generations of bohemian rhetoric—and some of a more serious kind—against the reign of goods and money, the very principle of quantification. Yet, like Shelley, Baudelaire was of two minds or moralities. He dreamed of a lifetime of "unlimited credit" and continues to embarrass most of his biographers by his scrounging after money, not usually for simple subsistence but to maintain a "position."

Half-conscious usually, or rationalized away, the warring impulses and desires, the wish to enjoy the things of this world while viewing the world from a stance of contempt, came to afflict more and more writers as the century went on. And the confusion grew. That a writer like Dumas *fils* could make a fortune presented no problem, but that Victor Hugo could was something else. Beyond making a living, beyond Grub Street, desire could move out toward unheard-of rewards. Cesar Grana writes in *Bohemian Versus Bourgeois*: "The claims of the dispenser of intellectual values were always made to rest on the contention that these were higher things which could not be rendered into utilitarian terms. And yet, of course, the pragmatic point of the writer's demand on the public was to obtain a predictable rate of reward for his work." "Predictable" meant a rate such as obtained for material goods or services; writing was becoming rationalized, its value measurable now as previously its values had not been.

Flaubert once said that a successful writer would "live like a bourgeois and think as a demi-god." A fine, epigrammatic way around the dilemma, but is it possible to do that? Doesn't living like a bourgeois mean thinking like one, at least in certain respects? The best definition I know of the bourgeois mind is that of Charles Péguy, who said that such a mind "always and inevitably prefers the visible to the invisible." But the values of literature are, or have traditionally been held to be, invisible, which is to say impalpable, nonutilitarian, of the spirit, resistant to being priced. One could ignore the contradiction but it was a real one. When, after the huge success of his proletarian novels, Jack London half ruefully remarked, "I guess I'm the only person in the world who's making money out of socialism" he was testifying to a perceived opposition of values. What has happened now is that the values are no longer seen as opposed, that money, fame and literary merit have been all swept up into an amalgam, a single steamrolling force. It's difficult to imagine a serious successful writer saying now what Proust once did: "this eternal question of filthy lucre submerges me like mud."

There may still be an odd writer or two for whom getting rich or even well-off from his or her books would seem to be inimical to their seriousness (but

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which of them would be likely to announce it?), and there is doubtless a residue of uneasiness among many others about the swift convertibility of their talent into cash. But it's beyond question that the sharp antagonisms between the two realms have long since been eroded. It is an archaic attitude now, a touchingly innocent one, to regard a book which makes a lot of money as being by that token inferior.

Indeed, on a level below that of the really hugely successful novelists, the Micheners and Wallaces, in regard to whom esthetic criteria are scarcely pertinent, the books of literary artists—Bellow, Vonnegut, Styron, Mailer, Updike, Heller, Doctorow, etc.—find the figures working as part of the reputation and éclat: the best-seller lists, the book club and paperback and movie sales, the foreign rights and the rest. And it is fascinating to see how a commercial failure (measured of course in terms of the advance, the publicity campaign and so on) by a writer of literary stature, the type of failure which at an earlier time would have been put down to the book's having been *too artistic* or intellectual, is now thought of as its simply not having been good enough.

But what does "good" mean now? When, early in his career before the turn of the century, André Gide prayerfully addressed his readers—"please don't understand me too quickly"—he was pleading among other things against popularity, which he of course interpreted as signifying a failure of art. But now popularity has no such stigma—within certain limits, that is to say. No serious writer could fail to be troubled if he were to become as popular as the giants of mechanical fiction, but short of that, in a region where you calculate in tens or hundreds of thousands rather than millions, you move up as far as you can. The point to notice about this is that popularity (as determined by sales, publicity, perfunctory honors and so forth), money and merit have become inextricably intertwined, so that for all practical purposes popularity *is* money and money *is* merit or prestige.

Or let us say that money is a proof of merit, a sign of it, again within those limits that mark off the fictional machines from true imagination. (But even here the demarcations sometimes blur; *Fools Die*, the silly novel by Mario Puzo, whose *Godfather* had sold millions of copies, was treated in some quarters as a serious literary work.) If the distinction continues to be drawn between what are called "literary" and "commercial" books, there is also a new designation, the "literary-commercial," in other words, a book by a prestigious writer whose very prestige is employed to boost sales; the sales figures in turn augment the prestige.

That money has become a proof of worth in literary matters isn't simply a notion held by the public or by vulgar publishers. Writers themselves, whatever they may know in their hearts, contribute to the force of the proposition. A chief way they do this is by demanding larger and larger advances and higher royalty rates, out of avarice in some cases, but in others, because the size of the advance and the royalty rate have come to help fix their standing vis-à-vis other writers. (It may be argued that the more a publisher has invested in a book the more he is likely to do for it, but this is debatable; the principle of not throwing good money after bad obtains here as in any other business.) Important writers leave their publishers because of the latters' refusal to match the advances given to rivals; the advances themselves are news items, quasi-mystical facts which in a strange and sinister way become very nearly the equivalents of the not yet written books.

The corruption of actual work under the reign of money is seldom flagrant. Few writers of authentic talent "sell out" these days—the phrase itself seems a little quaint—but most are affected nevertheless. They may curb their "experimental" tendencies, may write a little more seductively than their esthetic sense would condone. They may produce a "bigger" book, literally a longer one, than is artistically or intellectually right; Mailer's *Executioner's Song* and Barth's *Letters* are examples of works that seem to me inflated beyond their proper dimensions. Writers of short stories feel the pressure to do a novel, writers of "small" novels are urged to do larger ones.

Everywhere there is a sense of coercion, of unfreedom and of a contamination which may have become so ingrained in the way the world proceeds now that it is easier for us to think of it as natural than to keep it under any kind of moral scrutiny. And there is a sense of imbalance which has been brought about by a shift from writing which goes into the world because it

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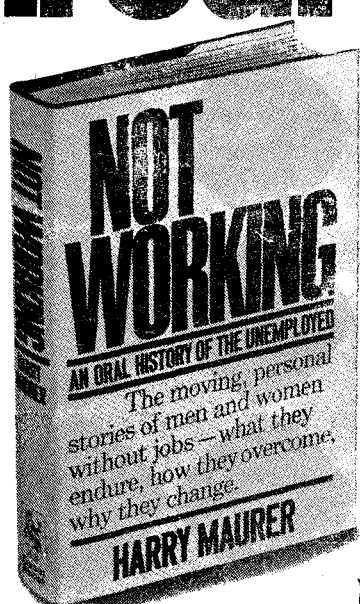
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must, and has, among other fates, an economic one, to writing upon which the economic has fastened from the start, so that it will be bound to meddle with the other, presumably more significant, fate. As a counterweight to a dreamy idea of writing as otherworldly and pure—a pseudoreligion—the secularization of writing through commerce may be a good thing. But the loss is great to our sense of literature as a means of freedom from the quantifiable, from the oppressions of material force: literature as a dimension beyond utility, truth that resists being bought.

In Gissing's *New Grub Street*, Jasper Milgram speaks of what he hopes to get from his literary endeavors, reciting a litany of desires we can recognize as having remained essentially unchanged since that time. "My aim," he says, "is to have easy command of all the pleasures desired by a cultivated man. I want to live among beautiful things, and never to be troubled by vulgar difficulties. I want to travel and enrich my mind in foreign countries. I want to associate on equal terms with refined and interesting people. I want to be known, to be familiarly referred to, to feel when I enter a room that people regard me with . . . curiosity."

Only a puritan, a feverish ascetic, would see anything shameful in this. But if it isn't morally culpable, it still has something disquieting about it, it smacks of calculation and of the cult of the visible in bourgeois terms; it's too comfortable as an aspiration. Money is too comfortable, too accommodating to the ascendancy of power over imagination, to be an overriding aspiration for writers. Which doesn't mean they should be asked to renounce it. (All too many have nothing to renounce. Thirty years ago Malcolm Cowley estimated in *The Literary Situation* that the average yearly income, from writing, of serious writers in America was considerably less than that of the Southern sharecropper, and there is no reason to think this has changed.)

My point has been that when writing does turn into riches for some important writers, when money becomes a function of literary importance, something has happened in the atmosphere that we ought to notice. I haven't been pleading for older virtues. For one thing, the virtues have never been clear; as I've tried to show, writers have for a long time been of two minds about the things of this world and their relation to the increment the imagination offers as a type of corrective to those things. But we need to know that virtues and values are involved. I have no illusions: juggernauts aren't stopped by insights. Still, not to have insights, not to see, is to allow the juggernaut to roll over us without our even being able to call it by its name. □

FILMS

ROBERT HATCH

At a press conference following the advance screening of *Cruising*, the first question asked of William Friedkin, author and director of the film, was whether the audience was supposed to gather who had committed the final murder, a killing that occurs after the capture of the mass murderer whose pursuit has been the central theme of the narrative. Friedkin replied that he didn't know himself who the killer was and, when then asked if the ambiguity was deliberate, said he just hadn't been able to make up his mind on the basis of the available research. Throughout a stormy session, Friedkin put much stress on the extent and accuracy of his research, as though he had been making a scrupulous documentary, but *Cruising* is fiction, based on a novel by Gerald Walker and carrying the usual disclaimer as to real people or events.

Moreover, a prologue is being inserted into the film, stating that it is not intended as an indictment of the homosexual world but rather "is set in one small segment of that world which is not meant to be representative of the whole." The segment in question is the sadomasochistic society of leather and chains, and the final victim is a young man who is not seen to have any connection with it. Thus it would seem important to know why and by whom he was killed in a manner closely resembling that of the other homicides.

I go into this background because the homosexual community is objecting strongly to the movie on the ground that it portrays their way of life in degrading terms and suggests that it is per se dangerous. Certainly the picture degrades; it will repel heterosexuals and I would suppose most homosexuals. For the most part, the group scenes contain very little that I could identify as genital contact, however perverse; it looked to me like obscenely infantile messing around, calculated to offend almost anyone, whatever his or her erotic inclination. The one scene of intercourse, quite overt, occurs between Steve Burns (Al Pacino), the undercover cop assigned to track down the killer, and his girlfriend (Karen Allen). Friedkin is solicitous that no suspicion of homosexuality should fall on Burns or the actor who plays him. He also gave his opinion at the press conference that the mass killer was heterosexual, which suggests that his researches did not carry him very deeply into the complexities of sexual psychoses.

For all that, I think the militant homosexuals are unwise to be so belligerent about the picture. Like *Windows*, a terror film that centers on a demented lesbian and has also drawn the fire of homosexuals, *Cruising* is a piece of work so inept that it provokes unintended laughter. It may be that such places as Friedkin shows do exist and that murder sometimes befalls those who patronize them; people who hang out in establishments specializing in pain and humiliation run a danger of being badly hurt, whatever their sexual bent. No one, however, is apt to believe that anyone acts and talks as foolishly as do Burns and his associates. The New York Police Department, by the way, might object that the film portrays its personnel as brutal and incompetent, with little or no suggestion to the contrary: Burns finally gets his man only by the most blatant of narrative string-pulling. Neither *Cruising* nor *Windows* is sufficiently well made to survive for long on its own. The subject matter of both is noisome, the stories are implausible, the key episodes are farcical and the entertainment is nil. But of course if concerned groups gather at theaters, brandishing placards and shouting rude slogans, the press will note the disturbances, the public's interest will be piqued and the opportunistic sponsors of these sorry ventures may prosper.

In recent years, John Le Carré has been applauded, and well rewarded, for supplying the secret agent with a new personality and dossier, giving him a presence quite unlike the dashing manner and methods of John Buchan's soldiers of fortune. He is now a rather dispirited fellow, burdened by problems of his own, mistrusting the wisdom and morality of his employers, often grudg-

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ingly sympathetic with the chaps on the other side, and out in all weathers, a stained trench coat draped over his slumped shoulders, trying to do a job without getting killed in the process. We like him because we find him congenial, a soiled hero for a soiled time, yet a man loyal to his own principles who thus assures us that the concept is not dead. Little wonder that each new Le Carré thriller is greeted with an owlish attention that must secretly amuse its author.

As it happens, though, Le Carré was not the first to bring this persistent man to our attention—Graham Greene was recording his history long before we met Smiley. I ran into him before World War II as the unfrocked Mexican priest of *The Power and the Glory*, God's secret agent, you might say, and he may have been around still earlier. Greene picks up his trail again from time to time, most recently in *The Human Factor*, which Otto Preminger has made into a film from a screenplay by Tom Stoppard. It is an accomplished job by old hands at the work, and if it is a less dazzling entertainment than it might once have seemed, that is because the British, for understandable reasons, have been so preoccupied by the ambiguous allegiances implicit in espionage that a style of high-gloss verisimilitude has been devised to treat of such matters, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to invent new astonishments for the theme. Greene, Stoppard, Preminger and a clever company in no way let you down, but neither, I think, will they amaze you.

The spy under particular consideration here is Matthew Castle (Nicol Williamson), a self-effacing man whose formal courtesy and university poise mask heterodox loyalties and emotional pressures of some intensity. What makes Castle ill-suited to his trade is his capacity to fall in love, both with individuals and with peoples, and to remain in that state with little regard for his own best interests. In this respect he is the opposite of Dr. Percival (Robert Morley), a Harley Street specialist turned spymaster, who loves nothing but fishing, though to be fair, he is faithful to that. Percival, one sees early in the game, has much the advantage of Castle.

It was love that, some years earlier, had forced Castle to leave South Africa in a great hurry; BOSS had discovered that he was having an affair with Sarah, who is black. And he feels love, or call it a sense of profound gratitude, toward those who made it possible for him to be married to Sarah (Iman), a woman of beauty, elegance and courage, and to live with her and her son in a quiet London suburb. I'll leave the story there. *The Human Factor* is not a mystery, or not for long, but its clockwork is ingenious and I'm not for pulling it apart to explain how it works. When last seen, Castle is in a bare room with a distant view of the Kremlin, one of that small company of permanent "guests" (Burgess is mentioned, also Philby) whom the Russians somewhat contemptuously entertain in payment for past services. A phone conversation with Sarah in England has just been cut off, but he really had nothing more to say.

There are no villains in Greene's story (though Percival might so qualify), but much cruelty, along with a good deal of stupidity, in the bureaus for which the various characters work. Percival is a strong advocate of boxes, each man to his own, as a convenient way to limit the reach of conscience, and I would guess that surveillance is generally so organized in the world's acronymic spy centers. The obvious disadvantage, as *The Human Factor* is designed to show, is that it may be easier to discover who is pulling strings in Kazakstan than whom the man in the next box is seeing at lunch. Le Carré takes a very wry view of the "firms"; Greene, I think, hates them.

Prominent in the large cast is Richard Attenborough as a security officer who suffers because his ex-wife despises him, his daughter pities him and his social credentials are inferior to those of his colleagues. John Gielgud appears, very briefly, as someone very important. Everyone concerned takes the film with the seriousness essential to cloak and dagger entertainments, though the iciness of Percival's blood is a little hard to credit after all those Robert Morley ads for British Airways.

We are all God's children, true enough, but some of us are more appetizing than others and it is not easy to make a Lancelot out of a male whore. Paul Schrader (*Taxi Driver*, *Blue Collar*, *Hardcore*), who wrote and directed *American Gigolo*, and Richard Gere (*Looking for Mr. Goodbar*, *Days of Heaven*, *Yanks*) who plays Julian Kay, the call boy of the title, do their best to elicit sympathy, not to say respect, for their hero. Julian is not one of those laughable figures of contempt, a smirking Latin with Vaseline on his hair and tangos on his mind. Except that he walks with a good deal of hip in his gait, he looks like a recent graduate from one of the right law schools, well launched on the corporate litigation road to success. He drives a Mercedes, the bookshelves of his sunny flat are stocked with excellent bindings, he collects modern painters, knows his way around Parke-Bernet (Los Angeles branch), has access to the best country club, is greeted warmly by major-domos and speaks four or five foreign languages, at least to the extent of having memorized the appropriate phrase books.

With all that, Julian is a much troubled young man. He cannot, says Schrader in some program notes, "express himself internally, and so what he is building toward is not an explosion but an implosion." I don't visualize how that catastrophe would look on the screen, and it seems to me simpler, and more accurate, to say that Julian is riding for a fall. He has grown too big for his britches, so to speak, no longer willing to split fees with his Scandinavian madam (Nina Van Pallandt) or to carry out the "rough tricks" provided by his black pimp (Bill Duke). One day, accordingly, he finds himself framed for an uncommonly messy murder. Fortunately for Julian, Senator Stratton's wife (Lauren Hutton), who on their first meeting had offended his sense of professional dignity by trying to hire him, as she puts it with chic brevity, for "one fuck," learns to love the boy (though, like many whores, Julian suffers from an incapacity to return that emotion) and abandons social position and wealth to provide him with an alibi. There is a good deal of knuckle clenching, driving about in the rain, visiting low dives, confronting angry husbands and fencing with the police before Mrs.

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The deadline for submissions to the sixth annual Discovery/*The Nation* poetry contest, open to poets who have not yet published a book of their own poetry, is February 26, 1980. For additional information, call or write The Poetry Center, 92nd Street YM-YWHA, 1395 Lexington Avenue, New York, New York 10028 (212) 427-6000, extension 176.

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Stratton steels herself to the supreme sacrifice. All that makes for some lively scenes, but it is the usual suspense routine of the innocent rabbit looking for help from an unfeeling world. And it is done with the usual expertise—indeed, the film is expert from start to finish, which is perhaps why I find it so irritating. The glamour of prostitution seems to me a contradiction of terms in any context except that of the fantasies of hard-core pornography, and in that respect *American Gigolo* is decidedly soft.

When in 1932 Sergei Eisenstein, for lack of funds, was obliged to suspend shooting on *Que Viva Mexico!* and return to Russia, Upton Sinclair, the novelist and utopian socialist who had raised money for the film and was its producer, sold Paramount the enormous footage that had been made. Two movies—*Thunder Over Mexico* and *A Time in the Sun*—were drawn from Eisenstein's material; he saw both and rejected them as not realizing his twin themes of Mexico's social immortality and of death conquered by life. The cans of developed film were eventually sent for safekeeping to the Museum of Modern Art in New York and more recently the museum turned them over to the U.S.S.R.

So today there is yet a third "treatment" of *Que Viva Mexico!*, this one edited by Grigory Aleksandrov, who was Eisenstein's associate over many years and co-author with him of the script for the Mexican project. In a prologue to the new film, Aleksandrov explains that he has tried to recover the four "novels" that constituted the original plan, though one of them was never shot and can only be suggested by a couple of very brief scenes. And in fact this latest condensation of Eisenstein's incomplete epic (ninety minutes from I don't know how many hours of film) seems fragmentary throughout. Moreover, it is apparent that the director was not very successful with the nonprofessional peasant actors who figure so prominently in the work. They are appealing, sometimes impressive, almost invariably beautiful, but abashed by self-consciousness. And the scenario for the one fictional segment, a melodrama of colonial tyranny in the time of Porfirio Diaz, in which I assume at least some professionals were used, is too crudely propagandistic to carry much weight. Eisenstein never had a light hand with propaganda, and for this film Aleksandrov occasionally adds party doctrine of his own. His version ends on a crescendo of agitprop.

It remains, as always with borrowings from *Que Viva Mexico!*, that the photography atones for the shortcomings. Eisenstein's cameraman, Edward Tisse, was a genius; his temples, fiestas, the bull fight, the wedding, the pilgrimage are masterpieces of observation superbly recorded. How Eisenstein would have edited the work to develop his themes we shall probably never know; nevertheless, through Tisse's camera one glimpses the immortality and triumph of Mexico.

Que Viva Mexico! was shown at the Public Theater, New York, during the first half of February; it can probably be seen elsewhere in the weeks to come. □

INDIGENOUS MUSIC

NAT HENTOFF

During a rehearsal some twenty-five years ago, a young jazz musician informed Thelonious Monk that he was about to enter Juilliard. There was no immediate reaction. Indeed, Monk was capable of being impassive for days. However, later, as the musicians were packing up, Monk did provide the putative scholar with some parting advice: "Watch out you don't lose it up there."

For decades, most jazz musicians, insofar as they thought about institutionalized musical learning—and it was hardly ever on their minds—saw no value for jazz players in formal classes based on what were more or less European traditions and values. Jazz was essentially black, improvised, and its only credible academies were local and territory bands from which the true achievers would be graduated into first-rank combos and orchestras where they would keep on learning. After-hours sessions could also be of use provided too many rank amateurs were not admitted, thereby making it kindergarten play.

Furthermore, the consensus—as articulated by Monk in his gnomic way—was that going to a conservatory such as Juilliard could very well so paralyze a jazz tyro with textbook rules and pernicious notions of "proper" tone and phrasing that he'd be in danger of losing the spontaneity that is at the core of jazz. Those schools were an assembly line for the faceless, interchangeable ranks of symphony orchestras—not for the inheritors of such rule-*making* individualists as Louis Armstrong, Lester Young and Duke Ellington. Consider Miles Davis's narrow escape. He had enrolled at Juilliard, but soon dropped out to become an apprentice in Charlie Parker's combo. Why, Miles might never have been heard from again if he'd stayed in the academy.

Yet some players, like Thelonious Monk's former associate, were taking that chance. Cecil Taylor attended the New England Conservatory of Music, an affiliation that formed part of the indictment against him for years as being more "European" than black in his music. Now, of course, no one challenges the depth of Cecil's indigenous roots. Meanwhile, John Lewis earned a degree at the Manhattan School of Music. And when Monk himself needed a musician sufficiently hip to orchestrate his originals for a large ensemble, he chose Hall Overton, a Juilliard graduate.

By the 1970s, a growing number of younger musicians appeared to have no fear that they might have to include their souls as part of the tuition for schools of higher musical learning. They felt that their own musical imperatives were strong enough so that they could pick up whatever skills interested them while resisting any influences that might homogenize their imagination.

A powerful illustration of how black players are indeed selecting from—but are not being assimilated by—the academy is *Reality*, an album by trumpeter-fluegelhornist Frank Walton on Delmark (4243 North Lincoln, Chicago, Illinois 60618). Walton, as authoritative in the blues as he is in exploring polyrhythms and polytonality, has a Master's degree from Chicago's American Conservatory of Music. With him in the deeply swinging front line is alto saxophonist Henry Threadgill (best known as a member of the protean trio, Air). Threadgill has picked up a Bachelor of Music degree from Governor's State University in Park Forest, Illinois (whose graduates also include Chico Freeman). And Ari Brown, a blazing tenor and soprano saxophonist, also has a Bachelor's degree in music.

Drummer Ben Montgomery, moreover, has put in searching time at the Chicago Conservatory of Music, and bassist Rudolph Penson studied music

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at DePaul University. Yet I doubt that even Thelonious Monk, listening to this set, would be able to charge any of these jazzmen with lack of "soul" (openness and direction of emotion), thinness of pulsation or indistinct musical identities. Whether they, in turn, have significantly influenced the white academy is doubtful; but as the hotly lyrical and passionately probing music here indicates, they themselves have hardly been assimilated.

What has not changed, though, is that the real postgraduate jazz work is still being done in clubs and in such continuing testing grounds as the Association for the Advancement of Creative Music, a black cooperative undertaking of which a number of these players are alumni. A Master's degree is no guarantee that you can play the blues, but it may help you stretch it some. □

THEATER

HAROLD CLURMAN

It is no doubt contrary to the rules of the game for a critic to admonish an artist for his choice of esthetic procedure. Yet I remember having done so in reviewing Edward Albee's *The American Dream* in 1961. I liked that mordantly satiric one-act comedy, but along with my praise I sounded a note of caution. The play smacked of Ionesco, which is of course no sin, but I perceived some danger to Albee's talent in the pull toward stylization and abstraction.

I ventured to suggest that Albee as an American would do his strongest writing in the vein of *The Zoo Story* (1958) and *The Death of Bessie Smith* (1959), that is, more or less as a realist. The significance of these early plays extended beyond the bounds of their narrative argument but they were solidly rooted in the specifics of their environments. We sensed the malodorous murkiness of the rooming house in which the young man of *The Zoo Story* lived; we felt we knew the very street on which it was located. The whole "Bessie Smith" town in all its narrow oppressiveness became a palpable presence.

Stylization and abstraction are integral to all artistic creation, but I have always been inclined to believe that Americans are in general more potently expressive in the realistic mode. O'Neill is a prime example. To explain why this is so would take me too far afield: it would entail a consideration of the origins and development of our civilization and culture. But it is a fact that the most strikingly successful of Albee's plays are situated where the real hovers at the edge of the conjectural, the fanciful, the dreamlike, the gnomic.

A just proportion of the two main elements in Albee's work—the realistic and the speculative—was preserved in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* and in *A Delicate Balance*. It is not the strange hypotheses which made the lasting impression in these plays but the sharpness of the portraits: their relevance to social circumstance; the questioning of received opinion; the vehemence of feeling and the bitterness which its suppression provokes. When Albee abandons these anchors in the recognizable world for metaphysical ruminations, he gets lost and we are misled.

His latest play, *The Lady From Dubuque* (Morosco Theatre), baffled me. It begins with a party of friends who play games around the hostess, a dying woman whose malignancy is matched by the festering poison which issues from the hostile stupidity of her (and her husband's) guests. Such a group—who are they anyway?—could never be collected in one room and could never remain together for more than a few moments after the initial exchange of insults. Are these people supposed to represent our middle class? Are we to take them as "real" people or as gargoyles inspired by a sickened imagination?

And then after a long scene of random venom, two mysterious figures—a gracious "lady from Dubuque" and a cultivated black man—enter. The supposedly real characters confront the two symbolic ones who are, I presume, minions or heralds of death.

This entrance is followed by a barrage of wisecracks and sententious utterances on a range of unrelated subjects. From this we are to gather that the main question in life is "Who am I?"; it is also asserted that when we die the world comes to an end, etc., etc. Normally I might insist that such thoughts are idle or false, but in this instance there would be no point in doing so because they emerge from a vacuum and go nowhere; they float about in a virtually nonexistent context. Albee has not only lost his bearings but also cuts us off from our own, leaving us with no way to argue with him. He has created no dramatic body and therefore cannot make any dramatic or ideological statement. Actors, director, scene designer, audience: all are balked.

The kindest comment on the evening's event was made by my neighbor at the performance, a wise and forbearing person. "Effortful," he murmured. But I could only muse regretfully that I had once warned the author against such an exercise as this.

Many people find themselves puzzled, not to say indignant, that plays which aim at light entertainment are treated with more indulgence than plays of serious intent which don't come off. But this is only natural: we measure these matters by the challenge they present, each according to its kind.

Thus, while I was stunned and aggrieved by the scattered shots of *The Lady From Dubuque*, I found myself a cordial guest at *Table Settings*, served as writer and director by James Lapine (Playwrights Horizons, 416 West 42nd Street). It is a series of scenes—cartoonlike skits—about and around middle-class family life in this era of our confusion.

The particular family which is the subject of the play's jokes happens to be Jewish, and it contains a mother figure from "the old country," who regards the family dinner as the central rite of existence. But her son, daughter-in-law and grandchildren are Everyman and Everywoman in the middle-income neighborhood. Papa is eager for dry martinis with his meals, accepts all the conventions which do not disturb his professional routine as a lawyer, keeps his progeny at a distance from any intimate contact with him and lives in placid domesticity. The younger children are dizzy teen-agers, the elder son is eccentrically bright with a mind unimpaired by a diet of assorted drugs. Everything twirls around on a crazy track of everyday inanity.

The jokes are fundamentally the clichés of the moment rendered agreeable by the author's good-natured playfulness and occasional sparks of wit. What is especially gratifying in the evening are the performances by an excellent cast and the author's sprightly direction amidst a natty setting. Watching the show I felt as if I were turning the pages of a slick magazine with amusing caricatures of familiar scenes in a field of opulently colorful ads. Who can complain? □

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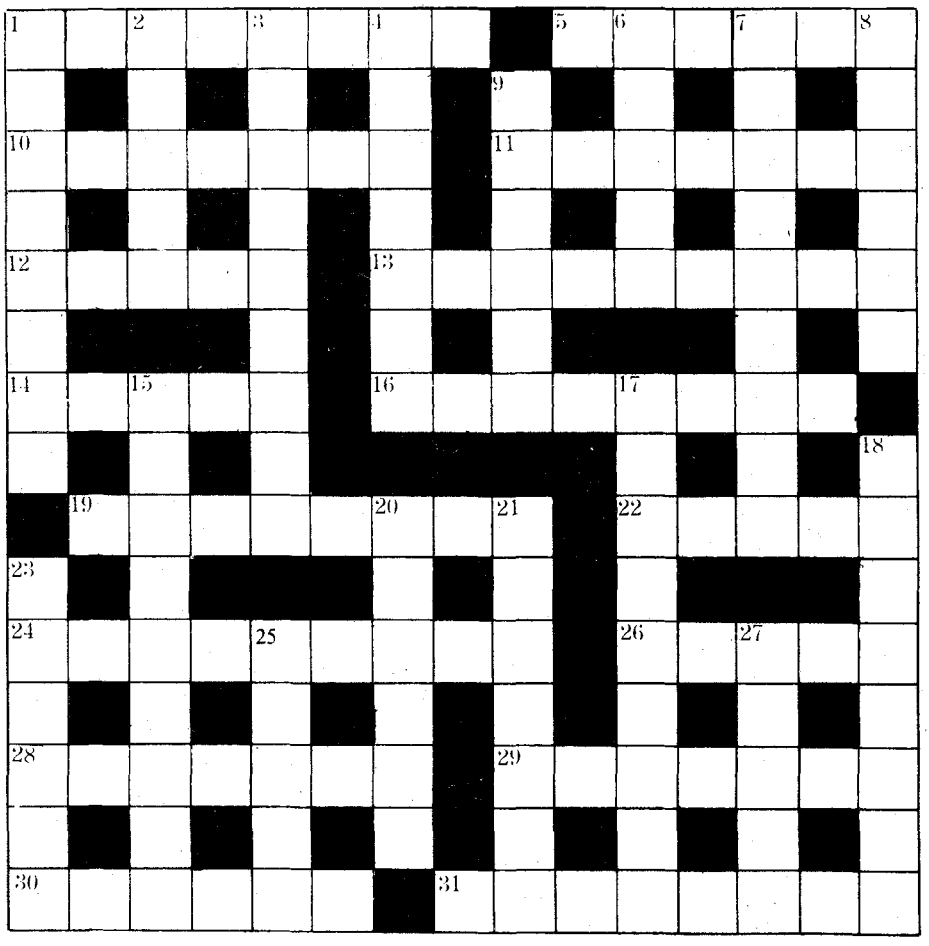
Crossword Puzzle No. 1809

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 By this process, usually associated with something harder, beer brings back service chow as the heart of it. (8)
5 Though 12 considered them to 9 when 27, they're not the type that depend on bracelets. (6)
10 In Agra, vestal rites are most serious. (7)
11 If the international body is wrong, it's not certain, but such power could be dangerous. (7)
12 There's nothing in Sir Thomas that suggests a poet. (5)
13 Bad sores that call for current controls. (9)
14 and 16 Miniature racers should employ such, but you lose power with them. (5,8)
19 Did they take a little off the top, even though they might offer you means of entry? (8)
22 One may, to make a lad spoon, or need something for sewing—or just confused! (5)
24 You can take it as Gospel, 12 once started out this way! (7,2)
26 The senior member has to perform with a strong desire. (5)
28 Get out by forcing a passage, perhaps. (7)
29 Make something in the market, possibly. (7)
30 Is Kennedy about to inquire what they did to segments of the force? (6)
31 A blend of green tea for one who is 27 in a certain range. (8)

DOWN

1 One has a second mate, which is rather important with a fine drizzle. (8)
2 Once an important defence organization, now a chair with nothing under it. (5)
3 Like the wires in your toaster, supposedly simple. (9)
4 With a rotten center, I find this causes a type of fever. (7)
6 Takes cuts at bad writers. (5)
7 Pass something in the grass—and it's passed again. (9)
8 Place the emphasis on what some don't like to work under. (6)
9 5 did to 12, as a clip might. (6)
15 Cause lots of trouble—at least smacks of a sort of it. (9)
17 Button markings, perhaps. (I feel bad when the boat goes!) (2,3,4)
18 Sounds like a downpour, sweetheart—you might be reminded of Rudolph. (8)
20 Relays, for example. (6)
21 It might be the point of the church. (7)
23 Some thing to take exception to. (6)
25 What rubber does, possibly. (5)
27 An old religious leader, though possibly a 31. (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1808

ACROSS: 6 Amps; 10 Praline; 11 Bramble; 12 Backdoor; 13 Banal; 15 and 26 Noah's Arks; 17 Expressed; 19 Hottentot; 21 Khufu; 23 Smite; 24 Blisters; 27 Extends; 28 Trigger; 29 Fire; 30 Elucidates. DOWN: 1 Saps; 2 Niagara; 3, 1 across, 9 and 7 Sticks and stones may break my bones; 4 One moment; 5 Ember; 8 Spelled out; 14 On the shelf; 16 Shebeens; 18 Patriotic; 20 Twitter; 22 Upright; 24 Basil; 25 Third.

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You knew the old *Post*?

Sure, I knew all the big ones. *McClure's.* Always muck, muck, muck, *Liberty.* Nice fellow, *Liberty.* "This article will take you 3 minutes, 45 seconds to read," he'd say, and we'd both laugh.

How about the newer magazines? Do you know them?

Oh sure. I remember *Politicks.* Poor fellow, died young. And *Viva*—never could make up his/her mind. Then there was *New Times*—he's gone too. Had a weak heart—took up *Running.* One thing I can't stand is this new trend to celebrity journalism—all those personality articles.

What's the matter, don't you like people?

No, I don't like *People.*

Some of those old magazines have been revived—*Life*, *Look*, even *The Saturday Evening Post.*

Yeah, they went to Switzerland and had those operations. They're nice—cute, but not the same.

To what do you attribute your long life?

Reading. Exercising my mind. I get a lot of good wholesome fresh opinions and nourishing non-doctrinaire radical and liberal politics. Four or five tough articles every week, plus some good hardball editorials that give my conscience a daily workout. Then I top it off with an intellectual cold shower of invigorating reviews of books, plays, art, music, dance, architecture, television, the media.

What have you learned in your 114 years?

One thing I've learned is, never trust a politician who says he'll never lie to you.

That's good advice.

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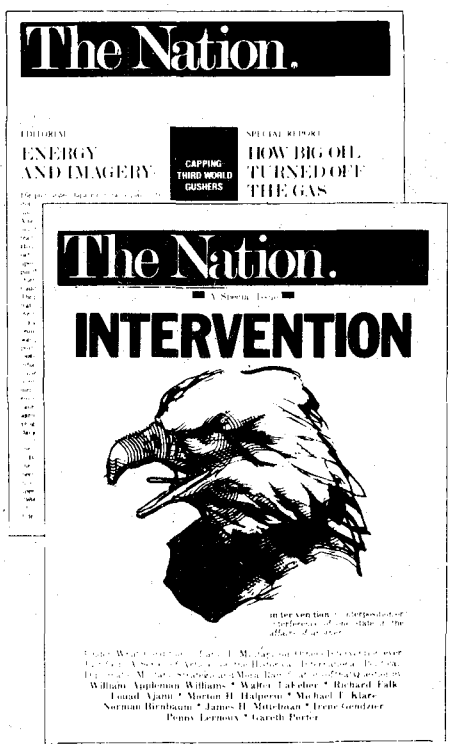

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